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THE HIDDEN MYSTERY

ROBERT BROWN

THE HIDDEN MYSTERY;

OR,

THE REVELATIONS OF THE WORD

(ROM. XVI. 25, 26; 1 COR. II. 7; EPH. III. 2-11; COL. I. 25-27; II. 2, 3);

BEING

THOUGHTS, SUGGESTIVE AND PRACTICAL, UPON PSALM XIX. 1-6;

Viewed in connexion with Gen. I. 1-19, *and* 2 *Cor. IV.* 6.

(THE SECOND AND CONCLUDING SERIES.)

BY ROBERT BROWN,

AUTHOR OF

"OUTLINES OF PROPHETIC TRUTH;" "THE PERSONALITY AND HISTORY OF SATAN;" "GLEANINGS FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH;" "DEMONOLOGY AND WITCHCRAFT," &c., &c., &c.

"I have used similitudes."—*Hosea* xii. 10.
"Comparing spiritual things with spiritual."—1 *Cor.* ii. 13.
"According to the analogy of the faith."—*Rom.* xii. 6.

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This Work

IS INTENDED AS AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE

ORIGIN, CHARACTER, PROGRESS,

AND FINAL ISSUE OF THE LIFE OF GOD IN THE SOUL OF MAN;

AS MANIFESTED IN JEHOVAH-JESUS,

PICTURED IN THE BOOK OF CREATION,

UNFOLDED IN THE BOOK OF THE DIVINE WORD,

AND WROUGHT OUT IN THE HEART OF THE

SINNER SAVED BY GRACE.

PREFACE.

In the Providence of God, I am at length permitted to bring out my Second Volume of "The Hidden Mystery," the First Volume of which was published so far back as the year 1877. I had hoped to have been enabled to bring it out not long after the former one; as large portions of it had been written out for several years previous to that period: but although I made several attempts from time to time to do so, I could never accomplish my purpose. It was evidently because *the Lord's* time had not come: for I had not the slightest difficulty in writing on other subjects; having since the publication of the First Volume brought out no less than five other Treatises—two large volumes of "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," a book on "The Personality and History of Satan," another on "Gleanings from the Book of Ruth," and a Treatise on "Demonology and Witchcraft": but in the early part of the month of last May, *the Lord's* time seemed to have arrived; and I might have said, in the words of the Psalmist, (although of course in a much lower sense), "my heart was hot within me," and "while I was musing the fire burned;" and "*then* spake I with my tongue,"[1] which at once became "the pen

[1] Psa. xxxix. 3.

of a ready writer:"[1] for in the second week in that month I began to re-write the work entirely afresh—dividing it into Chapters as I proceeded. And now the subject opened out to me most gloriously: and incident after incident, and illustration after illustration, came pouring into my mind in such profusion, and so exactly when I seemed to need them, that I was enabled to write on continuously without break; and I actually completed the entire work in a little less than three months! Indeed, when I contrasted my former difficulty in the matter, with the ease and facility with which I now accomplished my pleasing task, I could not but see and recognise the Lord's hand in it; and gladly and gratefully do I give Him all the glory of it.

Satan of course, as usual, did every thing he could to harass me in my work; and although he was not permitted in the least degree to hinder *the progress* of the work itself; yet through a combination of adverse circumstances and events, he greatly troubled my spirit from time to time, and raged with great fury against me. This only convinced me the more, that the Lord meant to bless the work to many precious souls; and as I was deeply searched myself in writing it, I doubt not the Lord means to use it for the searching of others likewise.

In the Preface to my First Volume, I stated that the Title was intended *for the entire Work*, and as the former part (although complete in itself) barely extends beyond "the *origin*," or *source*, "of the life of God in the soul of man," I asked the reader courteously to suspend judgment upon it, until the Second and Third parts appeared; when I felt

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[1] Psa. xlv. 1.

assured that this Title would be fully borne out—thinking at that time that I should shortly be able to complete the whole Work. This, I think, will now be clearly seen; and I have, therefore, only to commend the Work itself to God; and to ask the reader, who may be quickened, instructed, or comforted by it, to pray also for a blessing upon it, as well as upon its Author.

8, TRINITY ROAD, SCARBOROUGH,
August 10*th*, 1892.

The Psalm.

"THE heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork.

"Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

"There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

"Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath He set a tabernacle for the Sun.

"Which is as a Bridegroom coming out of His chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

"His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and His circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."

—xix. 1-6.

PART II.

THE EARTH.

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ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA.

Page 91. While these pages were passing through the press I met with the Rev. Archibald Stewart's "*History vindicated in the Case of the Wigtown Martyrs,*" from which I learnt that *these* martyrdoms did *not* take place in the reign of Charles II., as I have here stated, but in that of his brother, James II.—the exact date being May 11th, 1685, King Charles himself having died the 6th of February previous.

There was, it seems, an order of the Church of Scotland issued in 1708, just twenty years after the Revolution, to collect accounts of the sufferings for religion in the then late times of persecution; and Mr. Stewart gives an Extract from the Kirk-Session of Penninghame, which was the parish in which Margaret Wilson had resided, from which I take the following:—

"The Assize did sitt, and brought them in guilty, and these judges sentenced them *to be tied to palisados fixed in the sand, within the flood mark, and there to stand till the flood overflowed them, and drowned them.*

"They received their sentence without the least discouragement, with a composed smiling countenance, judging it their honour to suffer for Christ's truth, that He alone is King and Head of His Church. . . . .

"Upon the eleventh day of May, 1685, these two women, Margaret M'Lachland and Margaret Wilson, were brought forth to execution. They did put the old woman first into

the water, and when the water was overflowing her they asked Margaret Wilson what she thought of her in that case? She answered, 'What do I see but Christ wrestling there? Think ye that we are sufferers? No, it is Christ in us, for He sends none a warfare on their own charges.' Margaret Wilson sang Psalm xxv. from the 7th verse, read the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and did pray, and then the water covered her. But before her breath was quite gone they pulled her up, and held her till she could speak, and then asked her if she would pray for the king. She answered that she wished the salvation of all men, but the damnation of none. Some of her relations being on the place cried out, 'She is willing to conform,' being desirous to save her life at any rate. Upon which Major Winram offered the oath of abjuration to her, either to swear it or return to the waters. She refused it, saying, 'I will not. I am one of Christ's children. Let me go.' And then they returned her into the water, where she finished her warfare, being a virgin martyr of eighteen years of age, suffering death for her refusing to swear the oath of abjuration and hear the Curates."—*History Vindicated*, &c., p. 88.

Page 244, 5th line from the bottom, *for* ἅπα, *read* ἅπαξ.

THE HIDDEN MYSTERY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

"What is the thing of greatest price,
The whole creation round?
That which was lost in paradise—
That which in Christ is found.

"The soul of man—Jehovah's breath—
It keeps two worlds in strife;
Hell works beneath its work of death,
Heaven stoops to give it life.

"And is this treasure borne below
In earthly vessels frail?
Can none its utmost value know
Till flesh and spirit fail?

"Then let us gather round the Cross,
That knowledge to obtain;
Not by the soul's eternal loss,
But everlasting gain."

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—MATT. xvi. 25, 26.

"But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."—MATT. vi. 33.

IN the first part of "The Hidden Mystery," after having explained the purpose and object of the work, (which is briefly indicated in the opening page of this volume,) I pointed out that the Nineteenth Psalm seemed to have been written by the Psalmist upon a contemplation of the visible heavens; and that, in speaking of the revelation which God

has thus made of Himself in His *works*, He passed on to speak of the revelation which He had likewise made of Himself in His *Word*. I also pointed out that the first six verses of the Psalm had a further signification than the bare import of the words would at first sight seem to imply: for while they *primarily* no doubt referred to the visible heavens, yet the rapid transition from verse six to verse seven, (which nevertheless seemed as if it were but a continuation of a former subject,) shewed that they had a *further* meaning, a *hidden, spiritual* meaning; and this view was supported by a reference to the argument used by the Apostle in his quotation from the fourth verse of this Psalm, in the tenth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans; which he adduces in proof of the wide-spread preaching of the Gospel—thus clearly shewing that these verses contained in their secondary sense a figurative description of the Word of God—which is thus set forth to us as a spiritual firmament, wherein Christ, "The Sun of Righteousness," shines forth from one end of it to the other.

The former volume, therefore, consists of an elaborate unfolding of the first six verses of the Nineteenth Psalm in the above sense, in which they are opened out by reference to other passages of Scripture, on a comparison of "spiritual things with spiritual," (as we are commanded,) "according to the analogy of the faith,"[1] *i.e.*, in accordance with the general tenor, scope and design of the Holy Ghost, as He has been pleased to reveal it to us in the Divine Word—that portion of the Treatise having reference mainly to "The Sun of Righteousness" only, as the "origin," or source "of the life of God in the soul of man."

In this second part of the Treatise, I come now, therefore, to consider "the character, progress, and final issue" of that life, "as it is wrought out in the heart of the sinner saved by grace": with which object in view, I shall still keep to this Psalm as the basis of teaching; taking up the second part of it in its *literal* sense, and unfolding the

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Rom. xii. 6.

secondary, or *hidden* meaning of Gen. i. 1-19, in connexion therewith, in accordance with 2 Cor. iv. 6; as having reference *to the earth in its connexion with the Sun*, the source and centre of all its light and heat, as well as of its life and fruitfulness.

Let me then, in the first place, while noting the connexion between the first and the second parts of the Psalm, shortly open out the latter part of it, by way of introduction to the subject itself.

Verse 6. "There is nothing hid from the heat" of "The Sun of Righteousness," when He shines into a dark world—when He shines into a poor dark heart. No: for He says, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."[1] Hence

Verse 7 immediately adds:—"The law of Jehovah is perfect, *converting the soul:* the testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple."

"The law," תּוֹרָה *Tōh-rāh*, (from the root יָרָה *yāh-rāh*, to teach,) direction, instruction, doctrine, "of Jehovah"—the Self-existent One, the God in covenant with His people for their redemption, in New Testament language, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"[2]—"is *perfect*," תָּמִים, *Tāh-meem*, whole, complete—nothing can be *added* to it, nor *taken from it:*"[3] "for the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do"[4]—where note that the like effects are predicated of the *written* as of the *living* "Word;"[5] as the Psalm itself indeed continues, "*convert-*

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[1] John viii. 12.
[2] Eph. i. 3.
[3] Deut. iv. 2; Rev. xxii. 18, 19.
[4] Heb. iv. 12, 13.
[5] See an elaborate comparison of the two in the writer's first vol. of "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," Preface, p. xiv.

ing," מְשִׁיבַת, *Meshibath*, (from שׁוּב, *Shoov*, to turn back,) "the soul;" or, as *Walf* renders it, "bringing back the spirit"—which, in astronomical language, might be expressed by the force of gravitation bringing a wandering earth back again into its own orbit around the Sun; or, as we have it again expressed in New Testament language, "And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and *turned unto the Lord*"[1]—implying, of course, that they had previously been *turned away from Him*: which was indeed the fact, as Paul's commission to the Gentiles testified, "To open their eyes, and to *turn them from darkness to light*, and from the power of Satan unto God."[2] And what is this but "the Gospel of the grace of God,"[3] revealed in the Divine Word, and applied by the Divine Spirit, through "the engrafted Word, which is able to save the soul"?[4] For "of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures"[5]—"being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."[6] For this glorious Gospel not only reveals, as well as harmonizes, all the Divine perfections; but it also brings the soul that is the subject of it back again to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord: who is "able to keep it from falling," and Who will at length "present it faultless before the presence of" God's own "glory with exceeding joy."[7]

"The testimony," עֵדוּת, "Geh-dooth' (from עֵד "*gēhd*, beyond," that which pointed to something else, hence "a witness"—as for instance "the ark of the testimony," which pointed to Christ, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world")[8] "of Jehovah is," therefore, "sure," נאמנה, (from אֵמֵן *Āh-man*, faithful—equivalent to Christ's name of Ἀμήν "the faithful and true witness:"[9] Who, as "The Sun of Righteousness," is "the faithful

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[1] Acts xi. 21.
[2] Acts xxvi. 18.
[3] Acts xx. 24.
[4] James i. 21.
[5] James i. 18.
[6] 1 Peter i. 23.
[7] Jude 24.
[8] John i. 29.
[9] Rev. iii. 14.

witness in heaven"[1]), "making wise the simple." And what is this again, but "the witness of the Spirit" to Jesus, Who "convinces" the soul "of sin, of righteousness and of judgment," Who "testifies" to it of Christ,[2] as its "Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption"[3] unfolding to it the faithful word, and making "the promise sure to all the seed,"[4] who are interested in it? Hence His Divine testimony, through the medium of "the Holy Scriptures," makes His people "wise unto Salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus:"[5] while He separates them from the ungodly, and thus enables "the prudent man" to "foresee" and escape from "the evil;" when "the simple," or unconverted ones, "pass on, and are punished."[6]

Verse 8. "The statutes of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of Jehovah is pure, enlightening the eyes."

"The statutes," פִּקּוּדִים, *Pik-Koo-deem'*, (from פָּקַד, *pāh-kad*, to visit, appoint, charge, give in charge or trust), the appointments, charges, precepts of Jehovah are right, יְשָׁרִים, *Yāh-shareem*, (from the root יָשַׁר, *Yah-shar*, signifying to make straight, upright, as opposed to crookedness of mind or purpose), "rejoicing the heart." No "natural man" can of course ever rejoice in any of the Lord's statutes; because although "the law" itself "is holy, just and good,"[7] yet as he broke it in Adam, and was thereby "constituted a sinner,"[8] and has fallen under its awful "curse,"[9] it can but condemn him.[10] Nevertheless, when quickened by the Divine Spirit, and enabled to see that "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;"[11] whereby He became "the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth" in Him;[12] so that God can still "be just, and" yet "the justifier of him which

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[1] Psa. lxxxix. 37.
[2] John xvi. 7-14.
[3] 1 Cor. i. 30.
[4] Rom. iv. 16.
[5] 2 Tim. iii. 15.
[6] Prov. xxii. 3.
[7] Rom. vii. 12.
[8] Rom. v. 19.
[9] Gal. iii. 10.
[10] Rom. iii. 10, 19, 20.
[11] Gal. iii. 13.
[12] Rom. x. 4.

believeth in Jesus,"[1] he can now "*delight* in the law of God after the inward man,"[2] or "new creation" of God in him,[3] and "*rejoice* in the Lord" Himself,[4] because "the love of God is shed abroad in his heart" by the power of the Holy Ghost.[5]

"The commandment," מצוה, *Mitz-vāh'*, (from צָוָה, *tzāh-vāh'*, to command, or order), precept "of Jehovah is pure," בָּר, *Bar*, clear, bright, as the sun itself, as the word is used in Cant. vi. 10. And, therefore, it is immediately added, "enlightening," מאירת, (from אוֹר, *Ōhr*, to be or become light, to shine, to give light, as from the sun), "the eyes." See, and compare Gen. i. 15, 17; Num. vi. 25; Psa. cxix. 130; Is. lx. 1; Prov. iv. 18; in each of which passages the same word is used. And is it not so? For "if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."[6] For then "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, gives unto us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of our understanding being enlightened; that we may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."[7]

Verse 9. "The fear of Jehovah is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of Jehovah are true and righteous altogether."

"The fear," יִרְאַת *Yāh-rēth'*, (from the root יָרֵא, *yāh-rēh'*, signifying to fear, to venerate, to reverence religiously,) the reverential religious fear, "of Jehovah is clean," טָהוֹר *Tāh-höhr'*, (from a root, טָהֵר *tāh-hēhr'*, signifying to be pure,) incentive to holiness of heart and life, by separating the subject of it from all evil, and consecrating him wholly unto the Lord—"enduring for ever:" for he, in whose heart this holy fear of God reigns, is hereby proved to be one who is

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[1] Rom. iii. 26. [2] Rom. vii. 22. [3] 2 Cor. v. 17. [4] Phil. iv. 4.
[5] Rom. v. 5. [6] 1 John i. 7. [7] Eph. i. 17, 18.

interested in the Divine Covenant of grace; who, having "heard" Christ's "word, and believed on Him that sent Him, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation;" because he "is passed from death unto life;"[1] and to whom the Lord hath, therefore, promised that He "will never leave" him, "nor forsake him."[2] Hence it is written, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word."[3] And "now ye are clean," said Jesus to His disciples, "through the word which I have spoken unto you."[4] For it is this holy fear of God, which alone enables us "to keep" ourselves "unspotted from the world;"[5] "from" which "our Lord Jesus Christ" "gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us;"[6] and to "hate even the garment spotted by the flesh."[7] For then only are we able to "walk in wisdom toward them that are without,"[8] by "walking circumspectly,"[9] as one looking carefully around him, with a view of picking his way through "the mire" and "filthiness" of "this evil world."[10]

"The judgments," מִשְׁפָּטִי, *Mish-pahtee*, (from the root, שָׁפַט, *shāh-phat!* signifying to judge, determine, aver, regulate, direct,)—a term, not only having reference to the judicial law, comprising penal sanctions, and rules for deciding questions of property, &c., but comprehending all scriptural rules for the direction of life and conduct, questions of conscience, &c.—"are true," אֱמֶת, *Ĕmeth*, literally *truth* itself; and necessarily so, because they emanate from Him, who is "a God of truth, and without iniquity,"[11] and come to us through Him, Who is emphatically "The Way, *the Truth*, and the Life"[12]—and, therefore, it is added are they "righteous altogether;" "giving to all," as A. Clarke observes upon the passage, "their due equally." For "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"[13] "Is God" then

[1] John v. 24. [2] Heb. xiii. 5. [3] Psa. cxix. 9. [4] John xv. 3.
[5] James i. 27. [6] Gal. i. 3, 4. [7] Jude 23. [8] Col. iv. 5.
[9] Eph. v. 15. [10] 2 Pet. ii. 22; 2 Cor. vii. 1; James i. 21; Gal. i. 4.
[11] Deut. xxxii. 4. [12] John xiv. 6. [13] Gen. xviii. 25.

"unrighteous Who taketh vengeance?" "God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?"[1] And He hath "commanded all men every where to repent: because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man Whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead."[2] "For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then shall He reward every man according to his works."[3]

But oh! how blessed to know that God's punitive judgments can never fall upon the believer: for his sins have already been judged in the Person of his Head and surety, Jehovah Jesus Himself. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned, *κατέκρινε*, damnatorily judged, "sin in the flesh,"[4] *i.e.*, "in" Christ's "own body on the tree," (as Peter puts it,) "that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes ye were healed;"[5] or, as it is in Romans, "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."[6] For "our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be stripped of its dominion, that henceforth we should not serve sin."[7] Nay, even Satan himself, our "ghostly enemy," has likewise been judged:[8] although sentence has not yet been executed upon him: so that all "*the judgments* of Jehovah," that can affect a believer, are only those Fatherly chastisements,[9] as well as those rules and directions in the Divine Word, which relate to his well-being as a

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[1] Rom. iii. 5, 6. [2] Acts xvii. 30, 31.
[3] Mat. xvi. 27; Rom. ii. 6; 2 Tim. iv. 14; Rev. ii. 23.
[4] Rom. viii. 1-3. [5] 1 Pet. ii. 24. [6] Rom. viii. 4. [7] Rom. vi. 6.
[8] John xvi. 11. [9] Heb. xii. 5-13; 1 Cor. xi. 32.

son, and which are comprised in the "all things that pertain unto life and godliness, which His Divine power hath given unto us, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these we might be partakers of a Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."[1]

Need we wonder, then, that the Psalm continues:—

Verse 10. "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

The gold here spoken of is "Refiner's gold," or, gold so purified, that it could not be made purer; as Jehovah's words are said to be in Psalm xii.—"The words of Jehovah are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth purified seven times," *i.e.*, perfectly purified, *i.e.*, from the words of earth, from which they have been taken.[2] The honey here spoken of, is "the dropping of honeycombs," or, as Young translates it, "even liquid honey from the comb;" which is the sweeter and purest of all honey. And is not this the experience of every believer, who has "tasted that the Lord is good," and has been "blessed" in "trusting in Him"?[3] For then his experience is the very experience of the Psalmist himself, when he says, "I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep *Thy Word.* I have not departed from *Thy Judgments:* for Thou hast taught me. How sweet are Thy Words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth. Through Thy precepts I get understanding: *therefore* I hate every false way."[4]

Verse 11. "Moreover by them is Thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward."

"Warned," נזהר, instructed and admonished; from the root, זָהַר, *zāh-hār'*, to be clear, pellucid, to be bright, to

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[1] 2 Pet. i. 3, 4.

[2] See the writer's Tractate on "The Words of Jehovah." The Book Society, 2d.

[3] Psa. xxxiv. 8. [4] Psa. cxix. 101-104.

shine, to enlighten, to be fully instructed; and thence to see all clearly: which exactly describes the effect of the Word itself upon the heart and mind of the believer, as it is written:—"The entrance of Thy Words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple;"[1] and this enables us likewise to see *how* the Lord's "servants" are "warned," *i.e.*, by the light thus shed by the Word upon their pathway; discovering to them the snares and pitfalls laid in their way by the great adversary of their souls, so that they may be able to escape them. Hence the prayer of such an instructed one, "O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me."[2]

"Keeping," בשמרם, from שָׁמַר, *shāh-mar'*, to keep, to watch, to guard, to observe, as planets their appointed orbits round the sun. And to such "there is great reward." For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."[3] "Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men!"[4] For "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."[5] "For they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me."[6]

Verse 12. "Who can understand his errors? cleanse Thou me from secret faults."

"Errors," שְׁגִיאוֹת, *Sh'gee-ōhth'*, from שָׁגָה, *shāh-gāh'*, to wander, to go astray, to transgress; as the Jews, who, for their transgression, were condemned to be "wanderers among the nations;"[7] or, as the "ungodly men," spoken of in the New Testament, who "denied the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ," "to whom," as "wandering stars," "is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."[8]

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[1] Psa. cxix. 130.
[2] Psa. xliii. 3.
[3] Heb. xi. 6.
[4] Psa. xxxi. 19.
[5] 1. Cor. ii. 9.
[6] Isa. xlix. 23.
[7] Hos. ix. 17.
[8] Jude 4, 13.

And here note, how men, who "judge *according to the appearance*," and, therefore, "judge not righteous judgment,"[1] *miscall* God's works: for *they* call those worlds, which *orderly* revolve around the sun, *planets*, or *wanderers*; just as they call the Lord's people, who "follow on to know the Lord,"[2] and "walk" after Him in "the obedience of faith,"[3] people, who have "turned the world upside down,"[4] and who are "everywhere spoken against."[5] "Therefore the world knoweth us not," *i.e.*, as "sons of God," "because it knew Him not,"[6] *i.e.*, as "the Son of God:" "for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."[7] And from hence we may learn *how* it is that "the fear of the Lord," and "the light of His countenance" enables the believer to perceive and tremble on account of his own natural tendency "to depart from the living God." Hence his prayer to be "cleansed from secret faults," sins unknown to himself, which may not only be working in his heart unperceived, but be committed unadvisedly and unobserved; and which might make a way for the commission of more flagrant transgressions—as it is written, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."[8] Hence the prayer continues:—

Verse 13. "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression."

"Keep back," חָשַׂךְ, *Ghāh-sách'*, restrain, withhold me, as a planet is held by the force of gravitation in its orbit round the sun, when the centrifugal force would otherwise send it spinning away from it into space—"Keep" me by Thy mighty "power" "through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time:"[9] so that "presumptuous sins," the offspring of thought, purpose and deliberation,

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[1] John vii. 24.
[2] Hos. vi. 3.
[3] Rom. xvi. 26.
[4] Acts xvii. 6.
[5] Acts xxviii. 22.
[6] 1 John iii. 1.
[7] 1 Cor. ii. 8.
[8] Prov. iv. 23.
[9] 1 Peter i. 5.

sins against judgment, light and conscience, may "not have dominion over me"—"dominion over," ימשלו, (from מָשַׁל, *Māh-shal'*, to rule, or reign over—spoken of the sun in Gen. i. 18, and in Psa. cxxxvi. 8, as "ruling over the day;") or, in New Testament language, "let not *sin* reign in my mortal body, that I should obey it in the lusts thereof;"[1] but do *Thou*, O Lord, "take to Thee Thy great power"[2] and "reign" over me as my Lord and King. For thus only can I be upright, תָּמַם, *Tah-mam*,' complete, or perfect, *i.e.*, in the sense of Gen. xvii. 1; Job i. 1; Mat. xix. 21; James iii. 2, and similar passages; and be "clear of great transgression," as Boothroyd renders the passage; and so be preserved from final apostacy. For then, in New Testament language, "Sin shall *not* have *dominion* over me:"[3] for I shall "live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me;"[4] in the full realization that I am "not" now "under the law, but under grace."[5] And hence he concludes:—

Verse 14. "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my Strength, and my Redeemer."

For as such an one knows, not only from the Divine Word, but also from his own heart-felt experience, that "from within, out of the heart of men," as from an evil fountain, "proceed evil thoughts," which lead to all "wickedness," "pride," and "foolishness;"[6] and that only he, who "offends not in word," is considered in God's sight as "a perfect man;"[7] he, therefore, utters this closing prayer—which, in New Testament language might be rendered: "Work in me to will and to do of Thine own good pleasure;"[8] "making me perfect in every good work to do Thy will, working in me that which is well-pleasing in Thy sight, through Jesus Christ;"[9] and "cast down" out of my

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[1] Rom. vi. 12.
[2] Rev. xi. 17.
[3] Rom. vi. 14.
[4] Gal. ii. 20.
[5] Rom. vi. 14.
[6] Mark vii. 21, 22.
[7] James iii. 2.
[8] Phil. ii. 13.
[9] Heb. xiii. 21.

heart "imaginations," or reasonings, "and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of" Thyself, O "God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."[1] For I desire to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus"[2]—"strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."[3] For "in the Lord" alone "have I righteousness and strength;"[4] "to" Whom "be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."[5]

From this brief exposition of the latter portion of this Psalm, the judicious reader will now, therefore, be enabled more clearly to perceive the close connexion between the two parts of it—the astronomical phrases in the latter portion of it[6] thus serving to reveal more distinctly that the first portion really has, in its secondary, or hidden, meaning and application, the signification which I have assigned to it in this Treatise.

And as a closing, and striking, illustration of the far-reaching evils of the effects of ignorance, as well of the *works*, as pre-eminently of the *word* of God, I might here refer to the condemnation of the venerable Astronomer, Galileo, by the Inquisition in the year 1633, on a charge of heresy; because he had held and taught, that the sun was, as it really is, the centre of the Solar System, and that the earth, contrary to the then universal belief on the subject, did in fact revolve around it.

For several thousand years previous to this, man, "judging *according to the appearance*," had fixed *the earth* as the centre of all celestial motion, and had declared it immoveable—making the sun itself, as well as the moon, and all the planets, nay even the starry heavens themselves, to revolve around it. While, therefore, these erroneous notions existed, the true solution of the motion of the heavenly bodies was of course rendered impossible; and it

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[1] 2 Cor. x. 5. [2] 2 Tim. ii. 1. [3] Eph. vi. 10. [4] Isa. xlv. 24. [5] 1 Pet. v. 11.

[6] Some of these are also noticed in Dr. Bullinger's note upon this Psalm, in "A Key to the Psalms," by the late Rev. Thomas Boys, M.A.

was only when the distinction between actual and apparent motion had been discovered, and the sun itself had been placed in the centre of the Solar System, that all the complex motions of the heavenly bodies were made manifest, and the true mystery of the earth's motion round the sun was solved.

But as it was in the natural, so has it likewise been (if I may so say), in the spiritual world. For centuries during the dark ages, did the Popes of Rome place man and man's works as the central point in the spiritual creation of God —blotting out "the Sun of Righteousness," and impiously and vainly teaching that He was only, as it were, a fixed star, revolving round the Church, embodied of course in themselves, the source and centre of all light!

And so when the true motion of the heavenly bodies was discovered and taught by Copernicus, a Decree of the Index of the 5th of March, 1616, condemned all books which taught that system; while they subsequently summoned Galileo, who had published a "Dialogue on the Ptolemaic and Copernican Systems," in which the Ptolemaist was vanquished in the argument, before the Inquisition, and condemned him in consequence on a charge of heresy—stating in their judgment, that "the proposition that *the sun* is in the centre of the world and immoveable from its place, is absurd, philosophically false, and formally heretical; because it is expressly contrary to the Holy Scriptures. The proposition that *the earth* is not the centre of the world, nor immoveable, but that it moves, and also with a diurnal motion, is also absurd, philosophically false, and, theologically considered, at least erroneous in faith!" Hence the Jesuits, "those vigorous and experienced rowers," as Pope Pius VII. called them, "of the bark of St. Peter," in their then subserviency to Rome, when they published an edition of Newton's "Principia," in 3 vols, 4to, at Geneva, in 1742, lyingly say:—"Newton, in this third book, *assumes the hypothesis of the motion of the earth!* The propositions of the author could not be explained

otherwise, *than by making the same hypothesis.* From this circumstance, *we have been compelled to personate the character of another;* BUT WE PROFESS TO OBEY THE DECREES MADE BY THE SUPREME PONTIFF AGAINST THE MOTION OF THE EARTH " ! !

While, therefore, the true motion of the heavenly bodies was unknown, no astronomical discoveries could of course be made; but as soon as Copernicus had established that the sun itself was the centre of the Solar system, the simplicity and beauty of the heavenly motions became apparent; and it was then discovered that the planets so-called, so far from being "*wanderers,*" were moving around the solar orb in fixed and uniform orbits, and with a regularity so perfect, that their exact position in the heavens could be determined upon at any period in the history of the world.[1]

Then followed the wonderful discoveries of Kepler, revealing, not only the elliptical orbits of the planets, and that

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[1] Professor Mitchell of America, in his Lectures on Astronomy, I believe about the year 1859, related a very remarkable fact. He said that he had not long before met, in the city of St. Louis, Missouri, a man of great scientific attainments, who for forty years had been engaged in Egypt in deciphering the hieroglyphics of the ancients. This gentleman has stated to him that he had lately unravelled the inscriptions upon the coffin of a mummy, now in the British Museum, and that by the aid of previous observations he had discovered the key to all the astronomical knowledge of the Egyptians. The zodiac, with the exact positions of the planets, was delineated on the coffin, and the date to which they pointed was the autumnal equinox in the year 1722, before Christ, or nearly thirty-six hundred years ago. Professor Mitchell employed his assistants to ascertain the exact position of the heavenly bodies belonging to our Solar system on the equinox of that year (1722 B.C.), and sent him a correct diagram of them, without having communicated his object in doing so. In compliance with this the calculations were made, and to his astonishment, on comparing the result with the statements of his scientific friend already referred to, it was found that, on the 7th of October, 1722, B.C., the moon and planets had occupied the exact position in the heavens marked upon the coffin in the British Museum!

they swept over equal areas in equal times; but also their intimate relation to each other, so that the distance of any single planet from the sun having been once ascertained, and the periodic time of all being known, the distances might then be found for every planet in the entire system, without any further examination of the heavens whatever. These magnificent discoveries again paved the way for Newton's great discovery of the law of gravitation; and this again, and his further discoveries upon light and colour, for all the subsequent discoveries upon the polarization of light, chromatic polarization, and spectrum analysis; as well as of the further discoveries in electro-magnetism, and the various uses to which it has been applied.

And as it was in the natural, so has it been likewise in the spiritual world: for while man was sunk in such Papal midnight darkness, there could of course be no progress in the revelation of the *Divine* life: but when the morning of the Reformation dawned upon the world, and "the Sun of Righteousness" was once more revealed to it, man was again put into his true position, and Christ was once more held forth as the only true centre and rest of the soul, which being then united to Him by a true and living faith, once more circled round Him by the true gravitating power of the cross. And then it was that men, quickened by the Holy Ghost, began again to search into the Divine Word; and were rewarded by wonderful discoveries: for then the Divine Word assumed its rightful place in the economy of man's redemption, as revealing Him, Who is its Alpha and Omega, its sum and substance, its First and its Last, its glorious "Sun of Righteousness," shining forth from one end of it to the other; and from the heat whereof nothing is, or ever can be hid.

And just as a more perfect knowledge of the heavenly bodies, and the skilful use of fitting instruments, has enabled navigators to ascertain, by such means, the actual position of their vessels at any time upon the surface of the deep; and thus the more securely to traverse the trackless

ocean:[1] so has a deeper insight into, and a more perfect knowledge of, the Prophetic Word, enabled the diligent and prayerful student of that Word, to ascertain more clearly our actual position in the stream of time, and how nearly we may be approaching "the haven where we would be."[2]

The very *first* question invariably asked, through the speaking trumpet, by one captain of another, on their ships meeting and passing each other on the wide ocean is, "What

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[1] Herschel, the Astronomer, in his "Discourse" says:—"We have before us an anecdote communicated to us by a naval officer, (Captain Basil Hall,) distinguished for the extent and variety of his attainments, which shows how impressive such results may become in practice. He sailed from San Blas on the west coast of Mexico, and, after a voyage of 8,000 miles, occupying 89 days, arrived off Rio Janeiro, having in this interval passed through the Pacific Ocean, rounded Cape Horn, and crossed the South Atlantic, without making land, or even seeing a single sail, with the exception of an American whaler off Cape Horn. Arrived within a week's sail of Rio, he set seriously about determining, by lunar observations, the precise line of the ship's course, and its situation in it at a determinate moment, and having ascertained this within from 5 to 10 miles, ran the rest of the way by those more ready and compendious methods, known to navigators, which can be safely employed for short trips between one known point and another, but which cannot be trusted in long voyages, where the moon is their only guide. The rest of the tale we are enabled by his kindness to state in his own words:—'We steered towards Rio Janeiro for some days after taking the lunars before described, and having arrived within 15 or 20 miles of the coast, I hove-to till four in the morning, when the day should break, and then bore up; for although it was very hazy, we could see before us a couple of miles or so. About eight o'clock it became so foggy that I did not like to stand in farther, and was just bringing the ship to the wind again before sending the people to breakfast, when it suddenly cleared off, and I had the satisfaction of seeing the great sugar-loaf peak, which stands on one side of the harbour's mouth, so nearly right a-head that we had not to alter our course above a point, in order to hit the entrance of Rio. This was the first land we had seen for 3 months, after crossing so many seas, and being set backwards and forwards by innumerable currents and foul winds.' The effect on all on board might well be conceived to have been electric; and it is needless to remark how essentially the authority of a commanding officer over his crew may be strengthened by the occurrence of such incidents, indicative of a degree of knowledge and consequent power beyond their reach."—pp, 28, 29.

[2] Psa. cvii. 30, Prayer Book version.

is your *latitude?*" But, alas! this is the very *last* question that is ever thought of by passengers voyaging on the great ocean of life. And I would, therefore, in concluding this chapter, add a word of caution to the reader, as well as to the student, of the Word of God on this subject—that the clearest statement of Divine truth will never supersede the work of the Holy Spirit in the sinner's heart: and inasmuch as the Spirit Himself is the alone Author of the Word of God, He only can, therefore, be the true and infallible interpreter of it; and that, consequently, as man's natural "understanding is darkened," by reason of his "being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in him, because of the blindness of his heart,"[1] it follows, that unless a man be "born again,"[2] and "taught of God,"[3] however great his intellectual capacity, or however cultivated his understanding may be, yet he cannot possibly have any *spiritual* apprehension of the Word, neither can it in the least degree avail him in the matter of his eternal salvation. A beautiful landscape appeals to the sightless orbs of a blind man in vain; neither can the clearest apprehension of the Gospel of the grace of God by the *mind* of man avail anything unless his "*heart*" also "believeth unto righteousness."[4] Hence the Apostle desires for the Corinthians that their "faith should not stand in *the wisdom of men*, but *in the power of God.*"[5] For "the light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light: but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, *how great is that darkness!*"[6]

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[1] Eph. iv. 18. [2] John iii. 3, 7. [3] John vi. 45.
[4] Rom. x. 10. [5] 1 Cor. ii. 5.
[6] Mat. vi. 22, 23. Take the following painful utterance of a physician, who must have fully known how "fearfully and wonderfully" he himself was "made" (Psa. cxxxix. 14), and how admirably adapted every part of his bodily frame was to the world around him, as well as to the subservience of his own needs and requirements; and who seems also to have read the Word of God:—"I am not ashamed to confess that with me, this virtual

For as one truly says :—" The Bible is like a sun-dial—it requires light from heaven to make it of any practical use; that is to say, you might as well expect to learn the true time by holding a candle to a sun-dial, as to learn the mind of God and the way of salvation by mere human reason, unassisted by God's Holy Spirit. The most brilliant artificial light that could be thrown upon a sun-dial, would be perfectly useless for determining the hour. If the dial were of curious and beautiful workmanship, such a light might be of use to shew its beauties, but would be utterly powerless to turn the dial to the purpose for which it was especially constructed; whereas the faintest gleam of light from the sun, though it had to force its way though clouds or mist, if it were only just bright enough to cast a perceptible shadow, would indicate accurately the right time, and the purpose for which the dial had been made would be effected. In the same manner the most brilliant human abilities are perfectly useless for determining the spiritual truths of the Bible. They are of use, indeed, to shew the beautiful and curious workmanship of the Word of God; and learned, but unenlightened men, have written much and well upon this subject, but have shown themselves utterly

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negation of God from His universe, to me has lost its soul of loveliness, and although from henceforth the precept to 'work while it is called day' will doubtless gain an intensified force from the terribly intensified meaning of the words, 'the night cometh, when no man can work,' yet when at times I think, as think at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of the creed that *once* was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as *now* I find it—at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible. For whether it be due to my intelligence not being sufficiently advanced to meet the requirements of the age, or whether it be to the memory of those sacred associations which, to me at least, were the sweetest that life has given, I cannot but feel that for me, and for others who think as I do, there is a dreadful truth in those words of Hamilton—philosophy having become a mediation, not merely of death, but of annihilation, the precept *Know thyself* has become tranformed into the terrific oracle of Œdipus—

"'Mayest thou ne'er know the truth of what thou art!'" From "A Candid Examination of Theism," by Physicus, Trübner, 1878.

powerless to use the Scriptures for the purpose for which they are intended; whereas, if the true light from heaven shine upon them, the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. The light may have to force its way through clouds of ignorance, or mists of scepticism, or prejudice; but if the true light shine, though with ever so faint a ray, then the purpose for which the Bible is given us is effected,—the mind of God is revealed, and the soul is made wise unto salvation. But 'the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.'[1] 'For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' "[2]

Having, therefore, in the first part of this Treatise fully considered "the firmament of the Word," and set forth "the Sun of Righteousness," Who shines forth therein; I come now to consider more particularly the earth, which revolves around it; together with some brief account also of its attendant satellite, the moon; with a glimpse likewise of the stars, which also "shine together" therein. And may the ever-blessed Spirit of the living God, Who wrote this precious Word, breathe upon its living pages, and enable me to open out its fulness of meaning, and apply the teaching therein contained with power to my own heart, as well as to the hearts of my readers also, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

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[1] 1 Cor. ii. 14.

[2] 2 Cor. iv. 6. From "Foundation's Truths," by the Rev. Hely H. A. Smith.

CHAPTER II.

THE OPENING.

"Earth buildeth on the earth
Palaces and towers;
Earth sayeth to the earth,
'All things are ours.'
Earth walketh on the earth,
Glistening with gold;
Earth goeth to the earth
Sooner than it wold."

"Being in straits, I cry,
Lord make a way;
Open a door for me,
Help me I pray!
Gold, thou hast endless store;
Strength, all I want and more;
All hearts are in Thy hand,
Nothing can Thee withstand;
Lord, look and give command.
Lord, make a way."

"Love strong as death, nay, stronger,
Love mightier than the grave;
Broad as the earth, and longer
Than ocean's widest wave.
This is the love that sought us,
This is the love that bought us,
This is the love that brought us.
To gladdest day from saddest night,
From deepest shame to glory bright,
From depths of death to life's fair height,
From darkness to the joys of light."

"O Lord, how happy should we be
If we could cast our care on Thee;
If we from self could rest,
And know in heart that Thou above,
In perfect wisdom, perfect love,
Art working for the best."

"Speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee."—Job xii. 8.

"The earth also was corrupt before God."—Gen. vi. 11.

"Hear, O earth, the words of My mouth."—Deut. xxxii. 1.

"Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."—Isa. xlv. 22.

"The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy."—Psa. cxix. 64.

"Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth."—Psa. cxix. 90.

"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."—Hab. ii. 14.

THE Holy Ghost, speaking by the mouth of the Apostle Paul, in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, makes use of a striking spectacle which was sometimes witnessed in the City of Rome, as an illustration of one of the most solemn and awful truths, that could ever be brought before the mind of man. He says, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life."[1]

The spectacle to which the Apostle here alludes, is that of the triumphal procession of a Roman General, on his entry into the City of Rome, after a successful warlike expedition. Seated himself on a lofty car, drawn by horses richly caparisoned, he is moving slowly yet majestically through a crowd of admiring spectators. He is preceded on his entry into the city by many heralds, who are announcing his approach, setting forth his prowess, and scattering on every side sweet odours, which fill the whole atmosphere with their delicious fragrance.[2] On his right hand are prisoners of war, who have submitted themselves to the conqueror, whose "lives have been given them for a prey," and who are intended to grace his triumph; while on his left hand

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[1] 2 Cor. ii. 14-16.

[2] Plutarch, on an occasion of this kind, describes the streets and temples as being θυμιαμάτων πλήρεις, "filled with incense."

are the prisoners of war, who have not submitted themselves to the conqueror, and who are reserved for destruction and death. These all alike inhale the incense; but, oh! with what different feelings!

And thus would the Apostle have us to infer, is it the case with the preaching of "the Gospel of the grace of God" in "this present evil age:" for notwithstanding the fierce, continuous, and determined opposition of the devil and his angels, working through "the floods of ungodly men" against the progress of the truth, our glorious Christ is moving surely and majestically on to final triumph, "conquering and to conquer."[1] We, says the Apostle, as the preachers of "the everlasting Gospel," are marching on before Him, heralding His approaching Advent, and setting forth the infinite perfection of His glorious character and work; and "making manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place"—that He "hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour"[2]—thus scattering the incense of His precious merits on every side. To those, whom He will one day "set on His right hand," to receive His blessing,[3] "we are the savour of life unto life;" for to these His "Name is as ointment poured forth;"[4] but to those, who now reject Him, and whom He will one day "set on His left hand," and doom to a "cursed" death,[5] and who now "see no beauty in Him that they should desire Him,"[6] "we are the savour of death unto death. And who is sufficient for these things?"

And then, in the next Chapter, the Apostle continues the same subject, using another illustration equally forcible. He says, "But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this age hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should

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[1] Rev. vi. 2. [3] Mat. xxv. 33, 34. [5] Mat. xxv. 33, 41.
[2] Eph. v. 2. [4] Cant. i. 3. [6] Isa. liii. 2.

shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."[1]

And here again he contrasts the same two classes of persons, of whom he had before spoken, comparing them to two microcosms, or little worlds—the one lost and ruined, and left in its nature's darkness; while the other, equally lost and ruined by nature, having been enlightened by "The Sun of Righteousness," and quickened by the Holy Ghost, is now being clothed and replenished, under His transforming energy, with verdure and fruitfulness according to that which is written, "Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created; and Thou renewest the face of the earth:"[2] wherein is to be specially noted, that the Apostle here likens God's dealings with this world at the Creation, to His dealings with the saved soul in the matter of "the new creation" of God.

We have no difficulty, therefore, in fixing the emblematical signification of *the earth:* for the inspired record is in this respect most clear and unequivocal. It represents, as we shall see in our investigation of the subject, the natural heart of the sinner in its varied stages—as dark and unconverted, enlightened by the Sun of Righteousness, broken up into productive ground by the hammer of the Word, rendered fruitful by the dew and rain of the Spirit, and bringing forth fruit unto God; while it will ultimately be "filled with the knowlege of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." This is, as we see, very clearly intimated in the passage in Corinthians to which I have before referred, a passage which I shall have to unfold at some length in subsequent chapters; and I would here only, therefore, advert to some few other passages, where the same truth is taught.

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[1] 2 Cor. iv. 3-6. [2] Psa. civ. 30.

Thus when the prophet Jeremiah is describing the general apostacy of Israel, that their "wickedness" was "bitter, because it reached unto" their "*heart*," that they were a "foolish people," "sottish children," "had *none* understanding," were "wise to do evil, but to do good had *no* knowledge," he breaks forth into the following highly figurative language, taking the earth before the entrance of light into it, as an exact emblem of their lapsed and fallen state. "I beheld *the earth*, and, lo, it was *without form and void;* and the heavens, and *they had no light.* I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens had fled."[1] "O earth, earth, earth," says he, "hear the word of Jehovah."[2] So again Moses, in similar language, in "the words of" his "song," "in the ears of all the congregation of Israel," thus addresses them: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O *earth*, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass."[3]

Before, however, I touch upon the passage in Gen. 1 to which the Apostle refers in 2 Cor. iv. 6, as he has first dealt with the *unenlightened* microcosm in verse 4, I shall follow his example, and give a short exposition of that verse, by way of contrast; as it will thus serve to bring out more clearly the amazing grace of God in thus visiting and enlightening the sinner to be saved by Him.

The passages already referred to, as well as sad experience likewise, prove the awful fact, not only that to some "the Gospel" is "hid," but that it is to them also "a savour of death unto death."

I. What then is hidden? The Apostle says, "The glorious Gospel of Christ," or, as the original has it, "the

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[1] Jer. iv. 18, 22-25. [2] Jer. xxii. 29.

[3] Deut. xxxi. 1; xxxii. 1, 2. See also Gen. vi. 11; Psa. xcvii. 4; Isa. xxiv 4; Mat. xiii. 3-8, 18-23; Heb. vi. 7.

Gospel," or, good news, "of the glory of Christ;" or, in other words, that all the glorious attributes of God harmonize, and are magnified, in the divinely-perfect work of Jesus Christ for the saved sinner. God is emphatically "The Lord of glory;"[1] and Jesus Christ, Who "the Image of the invisible God,"[2] and "the brightness of" the Father's "glory,"[3] is He, Who reveals Him to the sinner saved by Him. "For," He says, "no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, Which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared," ἐξηγήσατο, "revealed Him."[4] And again, "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."[5] These, therefore, can say, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth;"[6] and, being quickened likewise by the Divine Spirit, they can add, and "we all, with open," or, unveiled, "face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."[7] For having seen in the "finished" work of Christ on their behalf, in "the glorious Gospel of the grace of God," that God can be "just," and yet "the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus,"[8] they are "saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation."[9] But from others, alas! all this is "*hidden*." But, oh! what an awful awakening, when they discover, but too late, what had been hidden from them!

II. Who hides it? The Apostle says, "The god of this age"—"the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now energizeth in the children of disobedience."[10] Christ styles him "the prince," ἄρχων, (one first in power, hence a ruler) "of this world;"[11] and he says he is "the prince of"

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[1] Acts vii. 2.
[2] Col. i. 15.
[3] Heb. i. 3.
[4] John i. 14.
[5] Mat. xi. 27.
[6] John i. 14.
[7] 2 Cor. iii. 18.
[8] Rom. iii. 26.
[9] Isa. xlv. 17.
[10] Eph. ii. 2.
[11] John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11.

innumerable "demons" under him; and that he has a "kingdom" on this earth: for John tells us, that "the whole world," outside the Christ of God, "lieth in," or under the dominion of this "wicked one:"[1] while Peter describes him "as a roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour."[2]

III. From whom then does he hide it? The Apostle says, from "them which *believe* not," whom he styles *the* "*lost.*" "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish," he says, "foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."[3] And this is what our Lord also says, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned."[4] And so we read of the effect of the preaching of this glorious Gospel upon such persons, in the days of our Lord and of His Apostles. "Their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart."[5] And again, "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him."[6]

And the reason is given us in the prophetic word: for thus speaketh the prophet Isaiah on this subject:—"Also I heard the voice of Jehovah, saying," "Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed."[7] And the Apostle John records the fulfilment of this prediction in

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[1] 1 John v. 19.
[2] 1 Pet. v. 8.
[3] 1 Cor. i. 18.
[4] Mark xvi. 16.
[5] 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15.
[6] Acts xiii. 27.
[7] Isa. vi. 8-10.

the days of our Lord. "But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him: that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory, and spake of Him."[1] So likewise, when Paul was at Rome, and "called the chief of the Jews together," and "they had appointed him a day, there came many to him unto his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."[2]

And, alas! as it was in the days of our Lord, and of His Apostles, so has it been ever since; and so will it be with numbers even unto the end! And note also their three steps, or stages, downwards to destruction. (1) They are "*blinded*," by the "vails" that are on their hearts by nature; (2) they *disbelieve* the Divine Record in consequence; and it is written, "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already,

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[1] John xii. 37-41. [2] Acts xxviii. 17, 23-27

because he hath not believed in the Name of the Only begotten Son of God;"[1] and hence (3) they are "*lost*"!

IV. How does he hide it? By labouring to keep them in the darkness and blindness of their state by nature; as the passage itself shews. Hence we read, "The seed is the Word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, *lest they should believe and be saved!*"[2] In Matthew he is called "the wicked one,"[3] in Mark, "Satan,"[4] and here in Luke, "the devil;" importing, not only of his *being*, that he is essentially the source, the centre, the essence, and the prime-mover of all wickedness; of his *character*, that he is consequently the malignant Satan, adversary, or opposer of all good, both in God and His creatures; and of his *mode of carrying out his hellish designs*, that he is a devil, or a lying slanderer, traducer, and accuser, both of God and men; but also that the whole of his mighty intellect, and the full extent of his awful power, and untiring energies, are thus unceasingly employed by him in carrying out these his diabolical and hellish designs.[5]

And oh! how dreadful the case of those, who have been wilfully deceived by him! For when the curtains of eternity have been lifted up upon the lost soul, and the full horrors of his eternal state bursts in upon his terrified spirit—when the long course of his persistent rejection of the Christ of God, and his resistance of the Holy Ghost is spread out before his eyes—when he fully realizes how often he has "judged himself unworthy of everlasting life,"[6] and that his "blood is upon his own head"[7]—when he "sees Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God," while he himself "is being thrust out"[8]—just a flash of the glory, as it were, for an instant, and then away

[1] John iii. 18. [2] Luke viii. 11, 12. [3] Mat. xiii. 19. [4] Mark iv. 15.

[5] See the Writer's "Personality and History of Satan," S. W. Partridge & Co.

[6] Acts xiii. 46. [7] Acts xviii. 6. [8] Luke xiii. 28.

"into the blackness of darkness for ever:"—then indeed will he know, and realize to the fullest extent, although alas! but too late, the awful value of the human soul, and the unspeakableness of the loss thereof!

Having now, therefore, sufficiently opened out the subject, I shall in the next Chapter follow in the track pointed out by the Apostle, and endeavour to shew how beautiful an emblem the old creation of God is of the new, by giving an exposition of portions of the First Chapter of Genesis, as unfolded by the Holy Ghost in 2. Cor. iv. 6; and I shall afterwards in subsequent Chapters enter more fully into detail, by comparing the various stages in the history of Creation, with analagous stages in the progress of the new creation of God in the heart of the sinner saved by Divine grace.

CHAPTER III.

THE TWO CREATIONS OF GOD.

"Here is my heart!—my God, I give it Thee,
I Heard Thee call and say,
'Not to the world, my child, but unto Me,'—
I heard, and will obey,
Here is love's offering to my King,
Which in glad sacrifice I bring,
Here is my heart.

"Here is my heart!—surely the gift, though poor,
My God will not despise;
Vainly and long I sought to make it pure,
To meet Thy searching eyes;
Corrupted first in Adam's fall,
The stains of sin pollute it all.
My guilty heart!

"Here is my heart!—my heart so hard before,
Now by Thy grace made meet;
Yet bruised and wearied, it can only pour
Its anguish at Thy feet:
It groans beneath the weight of sin,
It sighs, salvation's joy to win.
My mourning heart!

"Here is my heart!—in Christ its longings end,
Near to His cross it draws;
It says, 'Thou art my portion, O my Friend,
Thy blood my ransom was.'
And in the Saviour it has found
What blessedness and peace abound,—
My trusting heart!"

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation," κτίσις: "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. v. 17, 18.

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation," κτίσις.—GAL. vi. 15.

"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."—GAL. v. 6.

"And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."—GAL. vi. 16.

SOME Theologians, from the word בָּרָא *bāh-rāh'*, having been used in the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis, (which they say means to create *out of nothing*), and from the verb הָיָה *hāh-yāh'*, in the second verse, being here equivalent to the Greek word, γίνομαι, (which might be rendered ἐγένετο, *became*); and that the Lord expressly says in Isaiah xlv. 18, that He did *not* create (the word בָּרָא being here used,) the earth תֹּהוּ *tōh'-hoo*, (which is one of the words applied to it in verse 2,); as well as from the word בָּרָא *not* having been the word used in Exod. xx. 11; —have inferred that the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis refers to a period of time antecedent to the time spoken of in the subsequent verses of that chapter—to the *original* creation in fact of the heavens and the earth; while the subsequent verses refer to their *re-creation* and *restoration* after some fall; the second verse previously describing its actual state *as fallen*. They support this view also by the passage in Isaiah before referred to, which runs as follows:—"For thus saith Jehovah that created" (בָּרָא being the word *here* used) "the heavens; God Himself that formed" (the word here used being יָצַר, *yāh-tzar'*, to form, or frame, applied to the human frame in Psa. ciii. 14) "the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created" (here the word בָּרָא is again used) "it *not*" תֹּהוּ (which is one of the words used in Gen. i. 2, and is rendered in the A.V. by "without form"), "He formed it to be inhabited."

From the frequent references also in the Scriptures to Satan in connexion with this earth, and from the fact of his having been on three several occasions called by our Lord

the ἄρχων, "Prince," or chief ruler "of this world,"[1] they have likewise inferred that he had originally *been appointed as such* by God Himself; that after his fall he was dispossessed of the sovereignty of earth, which was reduced in consequence to the state of desolation recorded in verse 2; and that it was afterwards re-created and "fashioned" in the manner stated in the subsequent verses of that chapter, as the future habitation of another being, even of man, who was afterwards created as therein recorded; and was then placed at the head of that Creation in the room of the fallen angel: which they say accounts for Satan's malignant enmity against him, and his ceaseless attempts, ever since he succeeded in seducing him from his allegiance to God to ruin his posterity, and to regain possession of the earth which he had thus forfeited by his own rebellion and sin.

On the other hand, other Theologians assert that such inferences are unwarranted; and that chiefly for the following considerations. They say, that the first verse is to be regarded as a Preface, or heading of the chapter, and is not intended to give the order of Creation — that the two prominent words used in the first and second Chapters of Genesis, of God as bringing all things into completed being, are בָּרָא *bāh-rāh'* to create, *i.e.*, out of nothing, and עָשָׂה *ᵊgāh-sāh'*, to make; and that these words as so used may be regarded as virtually synonymous—that the word בָּרָא *is* used of the *whole* Creation in Gen. ii. 3, which shows that the creating and making were *not* separated by any lengthened interval, but that they both belonged to the six-day period spoken of in the first Chapter; the word בָּרָא being also the word used in verse 27 of that Chapter, as well as in Chapters v. 2, and vi. 7—and that the Hebrew word used in the second verse, which might be rendered in the Greek by ἐγένετο, and which has (as they admit) an equivalent meaning, means here, "*came into existence*," and *not* "became."

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[1] John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11.

Now without entering into this question, which would take me too far away from my subject, I would here most unhesitatingly affirm, that "All Scripture" being "God-breathed,"[1] the narrative of the Creation, as recorded in the first and second Chapters of the Book of Genesis, must of necessity be essentially true, in every particular; that the "days" therein mentioned are of course literal days, and not indefinite periods of time, of greater or lesser extent, according to the vain imaginings of men; and that the doctrine of evolution, as now held and taught by so many, is a lying, Atheistical doctrine,[2] utterly opposed to the teaching of the Word of God. Nevertheless, I would also as fearlessly assert, not only from a consideration of the passages of Scripture which I have already adduced, but also from many others, which I have still to bring before my readers, that the Holy Ghost intended, and has made use of, the state of the earth as recorded in the second verse of the first Chapter of Genesis, *as an illustration of the fall of man*, and the subsequent verses as a wonderful foreshadowing of the new creation of God in the heart of a saved sinner in Christ Jesus; and I shall now, therefore, proceed with my exposition of these verses in this light; and may the ever-blessed Spirit of the living God open it out, and apply the teaching of it to our hearts, for the Lord Christ's sake. Amen.

Gen. i. 2. "And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

"Without form"— תֹהוּ *Tōh'-hoo.* This word occurs 20 times in the Old Testament Scriptures, and has been variously rendered by our translators—the empty place, void place, wilderness, waste, a thing of nought, nothing, vain, vanity, confusion, and, as here, without form. It is one of the words used in the passage of Jer. iv. 23, before

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[1] Θεόπνευστος, 2 Tim. iii. 16.

[2] See the Writer's "Demonology and Witchcraft," &c., pp. 210-217, where this subject is more fully gone into.

referred to, and it is there, as it is here, also translated, *without form.*

"And void," בֹּהוּ, *Bōh'-hoo.* This word only occurs three times, *i.e.*, here, in Jer. iv. 23, and in Isaiah xxiv. 11, where it is translated *emptiness*, and is also conjoined with the former word, which is there translated, *confusion.*

From the above examples, therefore, it is evident that these two words have been chosen for the express purpose of vividly setting forth the utter desolation and emptiness of the world at the period here referred to; and in this respect it, therefore, forms the most perfect representation of the state of a lost sinner before God.

For what is the state of the heart of an unconverted sinner, when viewed in the light of the Divine Word? "*Without form*"—a huge, misshapen mass of ruin, unformed, and unmoulded to the Divine will. "*Void*"—empty and devoid of all spiritual good; because "without Christ," and "without God:"[1] for "God is not in all his thoughts."[2] With an unfathomed "*depth*" of evil in his heart: which is hidden from him; because the "*darkness*" covers it.

And is not this exactly what the Scriptures say of him? Nay, most of the terms here applied to the earth, are also expressly applied to the fallen heart of the sinner himself! Thus, "Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom," or, as the margin has it, "that is *void* of *heart.*"[3] So that "very froward generation," Israel, "in whom was *no faith,*" are said to be "a nation *void* of counsel;"[4] while the Gentile world are said to have been "given over to a reprobate mind," or, as the margin has it, "*void* of judgment."[5] And is not man's natural "understanding *darkened,* being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in him, because of the blindness of his heart"?[6] And does

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[1] Eph. ii. 12. [2] Psa. x. 4. [3] Prov. xv. 21. [4] Deut. xxxii. 20, 28.
[5] Rom. i. 28. See also Nahum. iii. 1; Titus i. 16, margin.
[6] Eph. iv. 16.

not that darkness also hide an awful depth? What saith the Word? "They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the *inward thought* of every one of them, and *the heart* is *deep*."[1] And "that which is far off, and *exceeding deep*, who can find it out?"[2] Only God Himself. For He has said, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: *who can know it?* I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins."[3] Yes: Satan has been plunging down its dark depths for near 6,000 years, and even he has not yet got to the bottom of it!

Hence we read further of the ungodly, that "their foolish *heart* was *darkened*"[4]—that they "walk *in the ways of darkness*"[5]—that they are a "people which *sit in darkness*;"[6] denoting their continuance in it, and contentedness with it: because "men *love* darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil."[7] And in one place we have the two combined in a woe against such:—"Woe unto them that seek *deep* to hide their counsel from Jehovah, and their works are *in the dark*, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?"[8] While all such are said to be under *the power of darkness*,"[9] *i.e.*, under the dominion of Satan, the "spirit that now energizeth in the children of disobedience"[10]—which shews us, that as the earth here symbolizes the fallen state of the sinner; so the darkness symbolizes "the kingdom" of Satan, whom the sinner now serves. Hence the commission from the Lord Jesus, "The Sun of Righteousness" to the Apostle, to the Gentile world was—"to open their eyes, and to turn them *from darkness to light*, and *from the power of Satan unto God*, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Me."[11]

And when men's eyes are opened, they then see these things in a different light. "There are two *depths*," says

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[1] Psa. lxiv. 6. [2] Eccl. vii. 24. [3] Jer. xvii. 9, 10. [4] Rom. i. 21.
[5] Prov. ii. 13. [6] Mat. iv. 16. [7] John iii. 19. [8] Isa. xxix. 15.
[9] Col. i. 13. [10] Eph. ii. 2. [11] Acts xxvi. 18.

one, "of which I seem never to have reached *the bottom*, or the shore—*my sinfulness*, and God's grace in Jesus Christ."[1] And one of our Reformers prayed thus:—"O incomprehensible Unity! O always to be worshipped most blessed Trinity. I humbly beseech and pray Thee, by the assumption and crucified humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, that Thou wouldst incline and *bow down the great* DEPTH *of Thy Deity to the* BOTTOMLESS PIT *of my vility*."[2]

"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

We see then, that there is no case so desperate, but that God can remedy it—no situation so apparently hopeless, but that He can rescue from it—no darkness so impenetrable, but that He can pierce through it; for at the very time when the earth was in this state of chaotic confusion; and darkness had so completely enveloped it, the Spirit of God was "brooding over the face of its waters." And the very first sign of the renovation of a fallen sinner is, when the Spirit of the living God draws nigh unto him, and breathes upon his heart.

But mark the purpose, for which the Spirit of God was thus brooding over the waters. God never does anything without a purpose; and that purpose is always a wise, a holy, and a beneficent one. The moving of the Spirit of God upon the waters, as well as upon the heart of the sinner, who is to be saved by Divine grace, is a prelude to the creation of light therein. And so we read in the next verse—

Verse 3. "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

Note here then, that saying and doing are not two things with God, as they are with us. "He spake, and it was done," literally, "it was; He commanded, and it stood

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[1] Bickersteth on The Lord's Supper. Meditation preparatory, p. 216.

[2] A prayer for deliverance from sin, and to be restored to God's grace and favour again. From Prayers commonly called "Lydley's Prayers," Parker Soc., Ed.

fast."[1] Note again, that it was God's *Word* that gave the light. "God *said*, Let there be light: and there *was* light." And so it is written, "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."[2] And again, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."[3] And yet once more, "The commandment is a lamp; and the law is light."[4]

And man could no more have had a hand in producing the light in the *spiritual*, than he could in the *natural* world: for Light itself is a *creation of God*. And of believers themselves, it is expressly said, that "we are His workmanship, *created* in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."[5] And how *could* darkness bring forth light? "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what *communion* hath *light* with *darkness?* And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"[6] No: "God is Jehovah, which hath shewed us light."[7] "The day is *Thine*, the night also is Thine: *Thou* hast prepared the light and the sun."[8] For God "dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see"—"covering Himself with light as with a garment"[9]—"to Whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."[10]

And I cannot but think that the mode in which this "command" was given, was intended (speaking emblematically,) to intimate God's infinite pity, tender love, and compassion, towards the objects of the riches of His grace. As if God had said, "See the 'empty,' 'dark,' and 'formless' state of the poor earth—see the wretched, lost, and ruined state of that poor soul; and 'let there be light' in it—let it, yes, '*let it have light*'—that light which shines so brightly amongst the holy inhabitants of the heaven above it!"

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[1] Psa. xxxiii. 9. [2] Psa. cxix. 130. [3] Psa. cxix. 105. [4] Prov. vi. 23.
[5] Eph. ii. 10. [6] 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15. [7] Psa. cxviii. 27. [8] Psa. lxxiv. 16.
[9] Psa. civ. 2. [10] 1 Tim. vi. 16.

Surely it was love and mercy only that could pour forth *such* light into the dark depths of our fallen, evil nature! Yes: "for God *so loved* the world, that He gave His Only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved."[1] For "God *commendeth His love* toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners *Christ died for us.*"[2] And "in *all* their affliction *He was afflicted*, and the Angel of His Presence saved them: in His *love* and in His *pity* He redeemed them: and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old."[3]

And was not that light emblematical even of Jesus Christ—"the Son of God" Himself? Who is not only "the Word of God," but also "the brightness of" the Father's "glory, and the express Image of His Person;"[4] and Who only giveth light unto the world?[5] For "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; *and the life was the light of men.* And *the light shined in darkness;* and the darkness comprehended it not."[6] And in the shining of this light into a poor dark sinner's heart, have we not Christ's first inroad into Satan's kingdom of darkness within him?

But what did the light first reveal? Would it not have been the abyss, over which the Spirit had been brooding? And so in like manner, the very first thing that the Spirit of God reveals to the heart of a poor awakened sinner, is his utter ruin by the fall, and the darkness and depravity of his natural state before God; aye, and in some instances, such as in Luther and in Bunyan, men whom the Lord intends to lay bare the hearts of other sinners to themselves, the

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[1] John iii. 16, 17. [2] Rom. v. 8. [3] Isa. lxiii. 9. [4] Heb. i. 3.
[5] John i. 9; iii. 19; viii. 12; ix. 5; xii. 35, 36, 46. [6] John i. 1-5.

flashing light of the Divine glory goes down deep indeed into their nature's evil! Hence our Lord, in instructing His disciples as to the nature of the Spirit's work in the heart of a saved sinner,[1] tells them, that "when He is come, He will reprove," or, as the margin has it, "*convince the world of sin*, and of righteousness, and of judgment."[2] And now appalled and terrified at the fearful sight, the sinner cries out in the bitter anguish of his spirit, "*Deep* calleth unto *deep* at the noise of Thy waterspouts: all Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me." And then getting a little comfort from the Divine Word, he adds, "Yet Jehovah will command His lovingkindness in the *day* time, and in the *night* His song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life."[3] And then once more, looking down into the abyss, which the light now reveals but too distinctly, he cries out again, "Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, *in darkness, in the deeps.* Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and Thou hast afflicted me with all Thy waves."[4] "*Out of the depths* have I cried unto Thee, O Jehovah. Lord, hear my voice: let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. If Thou shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared. I wait for Jehovah, my soul doth wait, and in His Word do I hope." "For with Jehovah there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption."[5]

And therefore, the second part of the Spirit's work is to "convince" the soul of "*Righteousness*"—that it has *none in itself*, and *where alone it is to be found*, even in "the Lord our Righteousness,"[6] Who now as "the Sun of Righteousness" "rises" upon him "with healing in His wings."[7] And so we read in the next verse.

Verse 4. "And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness."

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[1] See the Writer's tractate on "The Work of the Holy Ghost in the Heart of a Saved Sinner." The Book Society, 2d.

[2] John xvi. 8. [3] Psa. xlii. 7, 8. [4] Psa. lxxxviii. 6, 7.

[5] Psa. cxxx. 1-5, 7. [6] Jer. xxiii. 6. [7] Mal. iv. 2.

It was good because it was *a creation of God.* This is expressly stated by God Himself at the close of His whole creation;[1] and it is true: because God Himself is true,[2] and "cannot lie."[3] Everything, therefore, that *comes from God,* must *be* good: because God Himself is good. "There is none good but One," said Jesus, "that is, God."[4] Hence none on earth but those who are "born of God," can be *really good*: because they alone are "partakers of a Divine nature."[5] And, therefore, we read of Barnabas, that he was "a *good* man:" *because* he was "full of the Holy Ghost and of faith."[6] And this is, of course, the reason why God *calls it good.*

I have written so much upon light and colour in my First Volume of the "The Hidden Mystery,"[7] that I would only further notice here, that if God pronounce the light of nature to be so good, what must the light from heaven be, of which it is but the emblem! And if light itself be so beautiful a creation of God, how surpassingly beautiful must be the light of glory!

There is nothing more beautiful upon earth than the light, even a beam of which, in passing rapidly over a beautiful stretch of country, seems almost to create the very beauties that it but reveals. And the Lord, in setting forth His glory before the patriarch Job, by way of bringing him to a sense of his own nothingness, asks him, among other questions, "the way light is *apportioned,*"[8] or, in other words, to tell him what light is, how it is propelled through the ether, what constitutes the difference between the varied rays of light, how they differ, and how they are combined to form the infinite variety of tints and colours that we see in nature. And when we know that light is propagated through the ether in luminous waves at the rate of

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[1] Gen. i. 31. [2] Rom. iii. 4. [3] Titus i. 2.
[4] Mat. xix. 17. [5] 2 Pet. i. 4. [6] Acts xi. 24.
[7] See Chapters v., vi., vii. and viii., pp. 47-124.
[8] This is Young's translation of Job. xxxviii. 24, and he rightly separates the two questions, which the A.V. confuses by making them one.

186,000 miles in one single second of time; that there are millions upon millions of vibrations per second in every wave length; that the number of vibrations per second varies with each colour of the solar spectrum; and yet that the velocity of propagation of the luminous waves is the same for all the rays of light, whatever their intensity or colour; so that there is the most perfect harmony between them, however the "light is *apportioned;*" we may well bow before the Lord in wonder, love, and praise, and truly confess with Him that it is "*good.*"[1]

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[1] There are other "*apportionments*" of the light, which are equally wonderful, even its "apportionments" with respect to *other* "forces of nature," *so-called.* Take the case of *heat*, for instance. Radiant heat, like light, is transmitted in straight lines through homogeneous media; the velocity of its propagation is as great as the velocity of light; and heat-rays, when they enter a diathermanous medium, undergo a like deviation as do the rays of light, by what is called *refraction.* Indeed it may be said, that radiant heat is propagated according to the same laws as light; its velocity is of the same kind and degree; its direction is rectilinear in homogeneous media; it is reflected and refracted similarly; and the analogy has become still more striking since the discovery that heat undergoes double refraction in bi-refractive media, and that it is also polarized by reflection, and by simple and double refraction: so that it is probable that the calorific relations do not differ essentially from luminous radiations, both being due to the same cause, vibrations of the ether: so that whilst the disturbance produced by the motion of the luminous waves affects the organ of sight alone, that which proceeds from heat-waves, instead of giving us the sensation of light, produces the sensation of heat.

Take again the case of *sound.* Sound, like light, is propagated by a succession of impulses, and requires a certain time for its transmission: but, unlike the light, it cannot travel through any space devoid of air, and it travels at a far greater reduction of speed. Its velocity, however, like the light, is uniform at every portion of the distance traversed, and it is the same, whether the sounds be sharp or dull, feeble or of great intensity. The transmission of sound from a sonorous body to the ear can be effected through the medium of solids, liquids, or gases: but its velocity varies with the medium, through which it is transmitted. The state of the atmosphere also affects the velocity of its transmission; but the *average* rate of its progression through the air is only 1088.96 feet per second. The same phenomena of reflection and refraction occur in the case of sound as in that of light and heat, and they follow nearly the same laws. Sound is a vibratory movement. Sonorous bodies are elastic bodies, the molecules

And truly "the works of Jehovah are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein" (Psa. cxi. 2)—a statement which no doubt not only refers to the works of God in *creation,* but also to His works in *Redemption*—the one (as I have endeavoured to show in my first Volume of "The Hidden Mystery," and as I am proceeding to unfold, in this,) being an illustration, or foreshadowing of the other.

But then, I say again, if *this* light be so beautiful, what must "the light of the glory of the Lord" be! and what must the "glory" of the resurrection body be,[1] which is to be "fashioned like unto His glorious body,"[2] in "the inheritance of the saints *in light!*"[3] Ah! we shall see strange contrasts then. If "Sheol from beneath" shall be "moved" "to meet" Antichrist at his "coming" down thither, and all "the dead" shall be "stirred up" for him; and "they

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of which, under the action of percussion, friction, or other modes of disturbance, execute a series of alternating movements across their position of rest. These vibrations are communicated to surrounding gaseous, liquid, and solid media in every direction, and at last reach the organ of hearing! Sound like light, therefore, is produced by vibration, and the amplitude of the vibrations gives to sound greater or less intensity—the gravest sounds being produced by the fewer, and the most acute by the greater number of vibrations per second. And just as there are only seven colours in the Rainbow, so there are only seven notes in music, which are comprised between two extreme notes, the highest of which is produced by exactly double the number of vibrations of the lowest.

Lastly, take the case of *gravitation*, between which and the action of light and sound, there is a wonderful analogy. For as the space described by bodies falling freely under the action of gravity is proportional to the square of the time elapsed from the beginning of the fall: so is it with light and sound. For when the distance from a luminous point to the object illuminated varies, the intensity of the light received varies in the inverse ratio of the square of the distance. It is the same with sound: for the intensity of a sound received by the ear at different distances also decreases in the inverse ratio of the square of the distance: so that if two sounds, one being four times louder than the other, are produced at two different stations, the observer who is placed at a distance from the weakest of them, one-third of the whole distance which separates them, will believe that he hears two sounds of the same intensity. [See Guillemin's "Forces of Nature."]

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 43. [2] Phil. iii. 21. [3] Col. i. 12.

that see" him "*shall narrowly look upon*" *him*, and "consider" him, "saying, Is *this* the man" — this hideous, loathsome, fallen creature—"that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?"[1] what think you, shall be said in contrast of some poor, sickly, godly old woman, who died in a lowly cottage, when "clothed upon with" her "house which is from heaven,"[2] she appears, as one of the Lord's own "jewels,"[3] resplendent in glory, "shining forth as the sun in the kingdom of" her "Father"![4] Ah! "*then*," says the Lord, "shall ye return, and *discern* between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not."[5]

"God *saw* the light, that it was good." He looked upon it, as it were, with Divine complacency; as He does also upon that which it symbolized. This He did in the first instance upon the Head of the body itself, to which every member also of that body has to be conformed.[6] "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, *in Whom I am well pleased*."[7] And as all the members of that body were "chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,"[8] He loves *them* with the very love wherewith He loves *Him*;[9] and "the new man" in them is, therefore, not only "*created* in righteousness and holiness of truth"[10] (margin); but also "*after the image* of Him that created him."[11] Hence we read, "Jehovah *taketh pleasure* in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy."[12] "The steps of a *good* man are ordered by Jehovah: and He *delighteth* in his way. Though he fall, he shall not

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[1] Isa. xiv. 9, 16.
[2] 2 Cor. v. 2.
[3] Mal. iii. 17.
[4] Mat. xiii. 43.
[5] Mal. iii. 18.
[6] Rom. viii. 29.
[7] Mat. iii. 16, 17.
[8] Eph. i. 4.
[9] John xv. 9; xvii. 26.
[10] Eph. iv. 24.
[11] Col. iii. 10.
[12] Psa. cxlvii. 11.

be utterly cast down: for Jehovah upholdeth him with His hand."[1]

"And God *divided* the light *from* the darkness."

God did, as it were, take the part of the light against the darkness, making a marked distinction and separation between them; that the darkness should not encroach upon the earth, so as wholly to overwhelm it again. Hence when one part of the earth is in darkness, the other is in the light. And here we have not only a lively emblem of the advancement of "the kingdom of God's dear Son" against "the powers of darkness"[2]—"the rulers of the darkness of this world"—the "wicked spirits in the heavenlies;"[3] but also of God's watchful care over the "new creation" of God in believers, and how He "works in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure."[4]

Note also that "God saw the light that it was *good*," *before* He helped it: nay He helped it *because* it *was* good, because it was His own "creation"—because it emanated from Himself. "He *delivered* me, *because* He *delighted* in me."[5]

We have here then a foreshadowing of that conflict between the powers of light and the powers of darkness, which is revealed to us in the Divine Word; and especially of that inward conflict, which goes on in the hearts of all God's children in Christ Jesus. "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are *contrary* the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."[6] "I find then a law, that, when I *would* do *good*, *evil* is *present* with me. For I *delight* in the law of God after the inward man: but I see *another* law in my members, *warring against the law of my mind*, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through

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[1] Psa. xxxvii. 23, 24. [2] Col. i. 13. [3] Eph. vi. 12.
[4] Phil. ii. 13. [5] Psa. xviii. 19. [6] Gal. v. 17.

Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the *mind* I myself serve the law of God; but with the *flesh* the law of sin."[1] Nevertheless as God *takes the part of the light* against the darkness: He has said, "Sin shall *not have dominion over* you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."[2] And "if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."[3] And "if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."[4] "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall *not* fulfil the lusts of the flesh."[5] "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor *depth*, nor any *other* creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."[6]

Verse 5. "And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day."

Observe here that God always calls things by their *right* names: because names were originally intended to mark out, and to distinguish persons and things from one another, and to point out their peculiar natures and characteristics; and to do this requires knowledge and judgment. Man is unable to do this, because by the fall he has lost the necessary discriminating judgment: and although he is "born like a wild ass's colt;"[7] yet being "wise in his own eyes, and prudent in his own sight," *he* now "calls evil good, and good evil;" and "puts darkness for light, and light for darkness," and "bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."[8]

It is different, however, with the Lord: for the names *He* gives to persons and things exactly describe them, and point them out to us in their true characteristics.[9] Hence

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[1] Rom. vii. 21-25. [2] Rom. vi. 14. [3] Rom. viii. 13, 14. [4] Gal. v. 18. [5] Gal. v. 16. [6] Rom. viii. 38, 39. [7] Job xi. 12. [8] Isa. v. 20, 21.

[9] Bunyan has the following excellent remarks on this subject, in his "Light for them that sit in darkness:"—"'A Saviour, Jesus,' both words are of the same signification, and are doubled, perhaps to teach us that the

when He made a covenant with the Father of the faithful, and his condition, state and prospects were altered thereby, He changed his name in accordance therewith. "As for Me," says He, "behold, My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be *Abraham*" (*i.e.*, a father of a great multitude,) "for a father of many nations have I made thee."[1] Sarai, his wife's name was changed in like manner to Sarah, for a similar reason. So when his grandson Jacob, wrestled with the Angel of the Covenant, and "prevailed," He said unto him, "Thy name shall be *called* no more *Jacob*, but *Israel*" (*i.e.*, a Prince with God): "for as a prince hast thou power with God, and with men, and hast prevailed."[2] And again, when addressing his posterity, He says, "But now thus saith Jehovah that *created* thee, O *Jacob*, and He that *formed* thee, O *Israel*"—where observe the two words that are used with respect to the creation of the world—"Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, *I have called thee by thy name;* thou art *Mine*."[3] For the same reason our blessed Lord, when His relations with His disciples became more intimate, and their circumstances with respect to him were, therefore, improved, thus addresses them, "Henceforth I *call* you *not* servants" (which you once were); "for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have *called* you *friends*" (which ye now are); "for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you."[4] And hence the bursting transport of adoring gratitude and praise of the Apostle, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be *called the* Sons of God:"—but this is because we *are* the

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Person mentioned in the text is not *called* '*Jesus*' only to distinguish Him from other men—*for names are given to distinguish*—but also and especially to specify His office; His name is Saviour, because it was to be His work, His office, His business in the world. His name shall be called Jesus, 'for He shall save His people from their sins.'—Mat. i. 21."

[1] Gen. xvii. 4, 5. [2] Gen. xxxii. 28. [3] Isa. xliii. 1.
[4] John xv. 15.

sons of God[1]—"therefore the world knoweth us not," *i.e.*, *as* sons of God: it does not recognize us as such,[2] "because it knew Him not"—*i.e.*, as *the* Son of God: "for had they known it," says Paul, "they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."[3] "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."[4] And so when the wicked are cast away, and leave *their* "*name* for a curse unto" God's "chosen," He will "*call His* servants by *another* name," "a new name," adapted to their change of state and condition, "which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."[5]

With men, however, (as I have before observed,) the case is wholly different: for "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."[6] And *their rule*, therefore, is to *miscall* persons and things—a practice which is especially mischievous and deadly when relating to the things of God. And the reason why they do this, is because they "walk in a way which is not good, *after their own thoughts*,"[7] which are "evil;"[8] and consequently reject God's standard of truth in His Divine word.[9] Hence myriads "bless themselves in the earth," who do *not* "bless themselves in the God of truth;" although this is specially enjoined;[10] while "the covetous" are "blessed," "whom Jehovah abhorreth."[11] "And *now* WE CALL *the proud happy*;"[12] when "to Jehovah" he is "an abomination."[13] "Ye have wearied Jehovah with your words," saith the prophet, "yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied Him? *When ye say*, Everyone that *doeth evil* is *good* in the sight

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[1] John i. 12, 13; Rom. viii. 14-17.
[2] John xv. 18, 19.
[3] 1 Cor. ii. 8.
[4] 1 John iii. 1-3.
[5] Isa. lxv. 15; Rev. ii. 17.
[6] Luke xvi. 15.
[7] Isa. lxv. 2.
[8] Gen. vi. 5: Mat. xv. 19.
[9] Isa. viii. 20.
[10] Isa. lxv. 16.
[11] Psa. x. 3.
[12] Mal. iii. 15.
[13] Prov. xvi. 5.

of Jehovah, and *He delighteth* in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?"[1]

And, consequently, none of these perversions are so deadly or fatal, as those which relate to the matter of a sinner's calling and acceptance with God. There are many who "*call themselves* of the holy city,"[2] and "trust in *lying words*, saying, The temple of Jehovah, The temple of Jehovah, The temple of Jehovah are these;"[3] who nevertheless will never enter into it: for "there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or *maketh a lie:* but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."[4] Many "stay themselves upon the God of Israel; Jehovah of hosts is His name;" "but not in truth, nor in righteousness."[5] For they who are "ignorant of God's righteousness, and go about to establish their own righteousness," whatever "zeal" they may have "of God," can never be accepted of Him; for it is "not according to knowledge:" for the foundation of all is wanting, "they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God."[6] "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth."[7] And, therefore, as the above passage in Isaiah shews, they have neither righteousness nor truth—they are neither justified by God, nor sanctified by His Spirit; and are, therefore, still "dead in their sins, and the uncircumcision of their flesh."[8] Hence all the religious observances of such persons, who "have a form of godliness," but who are destitute of "the power thereof," and more especially if they "deny" it,[9] are an abomination to the Lord God of Israel. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me? saith Jehovah: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to

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[1] Mal. ii. 17. [2] Isa. xlviii. 2. [3] Jer. vii. 4.
[4] Rev. xxi. 27. [5] Isa. xlviii. 1, 2. [6] Rom. x. 2, 3.
[7] Rom. x. 4. [8] Col. ii. 13. [9] 2 Tim. iii. 5.

appear before Me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread" (literally "to trample,") "My courts? Bring no more vain oblations, incense is *an abomination unto Me;* the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, *I cannot away with;* it is *iniquity*, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts *My soul hateth:* they are *a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear them.*"[1] And when such worshippers ask such questions in their hearts as, "Wherefore have we fasted, and Thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and Thou takest no knowledge"—the Lord answers them, "Is it such a fast that *I* have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt *thou call this* a fast, and an acceptable day to Jehovah?"[2] While the Apostle addresses such religionists on this wise, "Behold, thou art *called* a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God"—"Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?" "For he is not a Jew, which is one *outwardly;* neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one *inwardly;* and circumcision is that of the *heart*, in the *spirit;* whose praise is not of men, but of God."[3]

Our Lord indeed uttered His warning voice from heaven against such, when He said "to the angel of the Church in Smyrna," "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which *say* they are Jews, and are *not*, but are the synagogue of Satan."[4] And He commends "the angel of the Church of Ephesus" for "trying" and exposing such lying pretenders, "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast *tried* them which *say* they are apostles, and are *not*, and hast found them liars."[5] And the time *will* come, when *all*

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[1] Isa. i. 11-14. [2] Isa. lviii. 3, 5. [3] Rom. ii. 17, 23, 28, 29.
[4] Rev. ii. 8, 9. [5] Rev. ii. 1, 2.

persons shall be called by their right names. For when the "King shall reign in righteousness," "the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly," or, as the margin has it, "elegantly." And *then* "the vile person shall be no more *called* liberal, nor the churl *said to be* bountiful."[1] Until that day, therefore, arrive, let *us* take *our* standard of persons and things from the unerring testimony of the Word of the living God; and then we shall be safe.

"And God called the *light, Day*, and the *darkness He* called *Night*."

And has He not done so? "But ye, brethren," says the Apostle, "are *not in darkness*, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the *children of light*, and the *children of the day:* we are *not of the night, nor of darkness*. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep *in the night;* and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. But let us, who are *of the day*, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."[2] And here we may see the first intimation of the distinction, as well as the irreconcileable "enmity" which God has "put," between the two seeds—"the seed of the woman" and "the seed of the serpent;" the intermingling together of which has been Satan's aim from the beginning, with the view of neutralizing and stamping out the truth of God itself: which, however, of course he will never be able to accomplish. Nevertheless, he has but too frequently prevailed in seducing the people of God from their allegiance to Him, by means of alliances with his own children. And it may be truly said, that in proportion as the Lord's people "are blameless and

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[1] Isa. xxxii. 1, 3-5. [2] 1 Thes. v. 4-9.

harmless," "without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom they shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life;"[1] so does the light of God's truth spread over the face of the earth: while in proportion as they are unfaithful to the trust reposed in them; so does the darkness of ignorance and error overspread it.

"And the evening and the morning were the first day."

The Jewish day *began in the evening*, and this is true also of that which this "Day" symbolizes; whether viewed in the type, or in the anti-type. Take the case of the type. When Jehovah smote all the first-born in Egypt, and "passed over the door" of the Israelites "upon the lintel, and on the two side posts" of which, He saw the sprinkled blood, He "suffered not the destroyer to come in unto" their "houses to smite" them: because "the first-born" of Israel had been thereby "redeemed."[2] "It is *a night*," He said, "to be much observed unto Jehovah for bringing them out from the land of Egypt; *this* is *that night* of Jehovah to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations."[3] Nevertheless, it was not until they had "*passed through the sea*," "*when the morning appeared*," "and Israel *saw* the Egyptians *dead upon the sea shore*," that they break forth into that "song" of triumph "unto Jehovah."[4] So likewise is this the case with the antitype, even with everyone of "the first-born ones, which are written," or, as the margin has it, "enrolled in heaven."[5] Take one only as an example, upon the principle of *Ex uno disce omnes*.[6] When Paul and Silas had been unjustly "cast into prison" at Philippi, and had been evil-entreated of "the keeper of the prison," as "*at midnight*" they "prayed, and sang praises unto God," "suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed."

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[1] Phil. ii. 15, 16. [2] Exod. xii. 23; xiii. 13. [3] Exod. xii. 42.
[4] Exod. xiv. 27, 30. [5] Heb. xii. 23.
[6] From one example you may learn of all.

Then "the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Now what was it that thus "quickened" him, and brought "*the evening*" of "the first day" into his soul? It was Paul's voice, through the Spirit, speaking to his conscience, "Do thyself *no harm:*" for, as an heathen man, he knew well enough what it was to return evil for evil, nay, even to return evil for good: but to return *good* for evil—and *such evil!* this *did* astonish him, and brought the conviction into his heart at once that *these* men must be God-like indeed, and that he himself must therefore, be a poor and wretched sinner! Nevertheless, it was not until Paul had answered his question with, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," and "had spoken unto him the word of the Lord," that *the morning* really dawned in his soul, and that he "was baptized," "and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."[1]

And now the soul being "justified freely by" God's "grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,"[2] "has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by Whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."[3] And thenceforth "the path of" this "just" one "is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."[4]

Passing over the work of the second day—for to treat of the whole work of Creation in the same manner would extend this Chapter to far too great a length, and would not indeed be needful for the illustration of the subject-matter in hand—I come now to

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[1] Acts xvi. 23-34. [2] Rom. iii. 24. [3] Rom. v. 1, 2. [4] Prov. iv. 18.

Verses 9 and 10. "And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called He Seas: and God saw that it was good."

And here we have the liveliest illustration of the new creation of God in the soul of a saved sinner: for, like the earth, it comes forth from out of the abyss of waters, and, like it also, it is perfectly separate, and distinct from them. For the "new creation of God" in believers is, as we have seen, made "in the image of Him that created him." Now every believer is made like unto Christ in his birth, in his death,[1] in his burial,[2] in his resurection,[3] and in his ascension.[4] It is only the first aspect of the subject, however, with which we have now to do.

After man had sinned, it was one of the challenges of old, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."[5] Yes: *God* can. God *has*. God *does*. And the Divine model in *this* respect is His own Divine Son. "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear *a son*, and shall call His name *Immanuel*—God with us."[6] "For unto us *a child is born*, unto us *a son is given;* and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Councillor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."[7] "When," therefore, "the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth *His Son, made of a woman*, made under the law, to *redeem them* that were under the law, that *we* might receive the adoption of *sons*."[8] And so "the angel" said unto His virgin Mother, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth *a son*, and shalt call His name Jesus"—"for He shall *save His people* from their sins"[9]—"He shall be great, and shall be called

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[1] Col. iii. 3; 1 Pet. iv. 1. [2] Rom. vi. 4, 5; Col. ii. 12. [3] Col. iii. 1.
[4] Eph. ii. 6; Col. iii. 1. [5] Job. xiv. 4. [6] Isa. vii. 14.
[7] Isa. ix. 6. [8] Gal. iv. 4, 5. [9] Mat. i. 21.

the Son of the Highest." For "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: *therefore* also *that* HOLY *thing* which shall be *born of thee* shall be called *the Son of God.*"[1] Here then we have *God's* answer to the challenge—"a *holy* thing" brought out of a *sinful* human creature![2] For that infinitely blessed One, though *born* OF *a sinner*, was yet in Himself, "*holy*, harmless, *undefiled*," and "*separate* FROM *sinners.*"[3] "And *in Him* is *no sin.*"[4]

Now *all believers*, without exception, are "conformed to *Christ's image*" in *this* respect. *They* also are "begotten of God" out of a *sinful* human nature, and as "a *holy* thing." We have seen from 2 Cor. iv. 6, that "God Who commanded *the light* to shine *out of darkness* hath shined in our hearts, to give" us "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." But "what *communion*"—i.e., *anything in common*—"hath *light* with *darkness*"?[5] By *nature* indeed we are "as *water* spilt on the ground,"[6] which is instantly defiled by such contact; but by *grace* we have that in us which, like *the light*, can shine upon the vilest thing in nature, and yet be wholly *uncontaminated thereby*. Such was *Jesus;* and such is *the* "*new creation*" of God *in believers in Jesus.* "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become *new*. And all things are of God, Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ."[7] For Jesus is *light in believers;*[8] and believers are the "*children of light in the Lord.*"[9]

But let us look at the subject more closely. Believers are said to be "born *again*," (or "from above," *ἄνωθεν*), "born *of the Spirit*," "born *of God;*"[10] and, therefore, in *this* respect they must be *like God:* for *like* begets *like*. And Jesus tell us that, although "that which is born of the

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[1] Luke i. 31, 32, 35. [2] Luke i. 47, compared with Matt. ix. 13; Luke xix. 10.
[3] Heb. vii. 26. [4] 1 John iii. 5. [5] 2 Cor. vi. 14.
[6] 2 Sam. xiv. 14. [7] 2 Cor. v. 17, 18. [8] John i. 4; viii. 12; xii. 35, 36.
[9] Eph. v. 8. [10] John iii. 3, 5; i. 12, 13.

flesh *is* flesh" (and nothing more, and can never, therefore, be altered, or improved,) yet "that which is born of the Spirit is *spirit;*"[1] and must of necessity, therefore, be *manifested as such.*[2] Peter tells us that believers are "partakers of *a*" (not "*the*") "*Divine Nature;*"[3] while Paul tells us, as we have seen, not only that "the *new* man" is "after God" "*created in righteousness* and holiness of truth" (margin);[4] but that it is "renewed in knowledge AFTER THE IMAGE OF HIM THAT CREATED HIM"[5] *i.e., after Christ's own image*—"a *holy* thing," as He was, born out of a *sinful* human nature. "For we are His workmanship, *created in Christ Jesus* unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."[6] "For both He that *sanctifieth* and they who *are sanctified* are *all of* ONE; *for* WHICH CAUSE He is not ashamed to call them *brethren;*"[7] as indeed He said to Mary Magdalene, "Go to My *brethren*, and say unto them, I ascend unto *My* Father and *your* Father; and to *My* God, and *your* God."[8] And, therefore, what is predicated of *Him* in this respect is likewise predicated of *them.* It was said of Christ Jesus, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, *Thy law is within My heart.*"[9] But it is said also of believers in Jesus, that they are "the people in whose *heart* is" God's "*law.*"[10] For the terms of "the new covenant" were, "I will put My laws into their *hearts*, and in their *minds* will I write them."[11] But *what* heart, and *what* mind? That which is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked"?[12] That which is "enmity" itself "against God"?[13] Nay verily: but the "*new* heart," which "I will give you," and the "*new* spirit," which "I will *put within you,*" saith the Lord[14]—"the *new man*" in fact, which is "renewed *after the image of Him that created him.*" Thus believers—*all* believers, as such, are made like

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[1] John iii. 6. [2] 1 John iii. 10. [3] 2 Pet. i. 4. [4] Eph. iv. 24.
[5] Col. iii. 10. [6] Eph. ii. 10. [7] Heb. ii. 11. [8] John xx. 17.
[9] Psa. xl. 8; Heb. x. 5-7. [10] Isa. li. 7, see also Psa. xxxvii. 31.
[11] Heb. x. 16. [12] Jer. xvii. 9. [13] Rom. viii. 7. [14] Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

unto Christ in His *birth.* And so, just as "that holy thing," Christ Jesus, the Lord, once lay within the womb of a sinful human mother, in contact with her nature, and yet wholly uncontaminated by her sin; so that which is "born of God" in believers, while they are in "the body of" their "humiliation,"[1] is now within them, (as it were,) in contact with their sinful human nature, and yet remains equally uncontaminated and pure. And "he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not."[2] For his "life is hid with Christ in God;"[3] too high for him to take down to lose, and too high for the devil to reach up to touch.

But then it might be asked, Does this new birth of the Spirit make any change in our *old nature;* or, as the Scriptures term it, "*our old man*"? Not in the least: for Christ's work is no patching up of old Adam; but, as we have seen, an entirely "*new creation.*" For, as has been before shewn from the Word, "that which is born of the flesh *is flesh;*" and can never, therefore, be altered, amended, or improved. "For I know that *in me,*" says the Apostle, "that is, *in my flesh*"—the nature which I derive from Adam—"there dwelleth *no good thing.*"[4] For "the carnal mind" being, as we have also seen "enmity" itself "against God," "is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be!*"[5] Hence "the flesh" or "old man" in believers is as distinct from "the spirit," or "new man" in them, as the sea is from the dry land, that came out of it; and consequently they are not commanded to attempt to amend it, but to "put it off."[6]

We see then that the sea represented the natural unconverted heart of the sinner, which I shall have to shew more particularly in my next Chapter; while the earth represented his renewed heart. For "that was not *first* which is *spiritual,* but that which is *natural;* and *afterward* that

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[1] Phil. iii. 21. [2] 1 John v. 18. [3] Col. iii. 3.
[4] Rom. vii. 18. [5] Rom. viii. 7. [6] Eph. iv. 22; Col. iii. 9.

which is spiritual."[1] And God has separated the one from the other; so that the sea, *in either case*, shall never again encroach upon the dry land. "Fear ye not Me?" then "saith Jehovah: will ye not tremble at My presence, Which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, *that it cannot pass it:* and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet *can they not prevail;* though they roar, *yet can they not pass over it.*"[2]

And I would here quote from John Bradford, the martyr's "Godly Instruction, containing the sum of all the Divinity necessary for a Christian conscience:" which furnishes a most admirable Treatise on this very subject. "A man that is *regenerate*," he says, "and *born of God*, consisteth of *two men* (as a man may say,) namely, of the *old man*, and of the *new man*. The old man is like to a mighty giant, such an one as was Goliath, for his birth is now perfect. But the new man is like to a little child, such an one as was David, for his birth is not yet perfect, until the day of his general resurrection. The old man, therefore, is more stronger, lusty, and stirring, than is the new man, because the birth of the new man is but begun now, and the old man is perfectly born. And as the old man is more stirring, lusty, and stronger than the new man; so is the *nature* of him *clean contrary* to the nature of the new man, as being *earthly* and corrupt with Satan's seed; the nature of the new man being *heavenly*, and blessed with the celestial seed of God. So that *one man*, inasmuch as he is corrupt with the seed of the serpent, is *an old man:* and inasmuch as he is blessed with the seed of God from above, he is *a new man*. And as, inasmuch as he is an old man, he is a sinner, and an enemy to God: so inasmuch as he is regenerate, he is righteous and holy, and a friend to God, the seed of God preserving him from sin, so that he cannot sin, as the seed of the serpent, wherewith he is corrupt, even from his conception, inclineth him, yea, enforceth him to sin, and

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 46. [2] Jer. v. 22.

nothing else but to sin. So that the best part of man before regeneration, in God's sight, is not only an enemy, but enmity itself.

"One man, therefore, which is regenerate, well may be called always just, and always sinful: just in respect of God's seed, and his regeneration: sinful in respect of Satan's seed, and his first birth. *Betwixt these two men, therefore, there is continual conflict, and war most deadly.* The flesh and old man, by reason of his birth that is perfect, doth often for a time prevail against the new man (being but a child in comparison), and that, in such sort, as not only other, but even the children of God themselves think that they be nothing else but old; and that the Spirit and seed of God is lost and gone away, when yet, notwithstanding, the truth is otherwise, the Spirit and seed of God at the length appearing again, and dispelling away the clouds, which cover the sun of God's seed from shining, as the clouds in the air do the corporal sun; so that sometimes a man cannot tell by any sense that there is any sun; even so our blindness and corrupt affections do often shadow the sight of God's seed in God's children, as though they were plain reprobates. Whereof it cometh, that they, praying according to their sense, but not according to the truth, desire of God to give them again His Spirit, as though they had lost it, and He had taken it way. Which thing God never doth indeed, although He make us to think so for a time: for always He holdeth His hand under His children in their faults, that they lie not still as others do, which are not regenerate. And this is the difference betwixt God's children, which are regenerate, and elect before all times in Christ, and the wicked cast-aways, that the elect lie not still continually in their sin, as do the wicked, but at the length do return again by reason of God's seed, which is in them, hid as a sparkle of fire in the ashes: as we may see in Peter, David, Paul, Mary Magdalen, and others.

"For these (I mean God's children) God hath made all things in Christ Jesus: to whom He hath given this dignity,

that they should be His inheritance and spouses. This our inheritor Christ Jesus, God with God, light of light, co-eternal and con-substantial with the Father and with the Holy Ghost, to the end that He might become our husband (because the husband and the wife must be one flesh), hath taken our nature upon Him, communicating with it and by it in His own Person, to us all, His children, His Divine Majesty (as Peter saith), and so is become flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bones substantially; as we are become flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bones spiritually; all that ever we have, pertaining to Him, yea, even our sins; as all that ever He hath, pertaineth unto us, even His whole glory. So that if Satan would summon us to answer for our debts, or sins, in that the wife is no suitable person, but the husband, we may well bid him enter his action against our husband Christ, and He will make him a sufficient answer.

"For this end (I mean that we might be coupled and married thus to Christ, and so be certain of salvation, and at Godly peace with God in our consciences) God hath given His holy word, which hath two parts (as now the children of God do consist of two men), one part of God's word being proper to the old man, and the other part of God's word being proper to the new man. The part properly pertaining to the old man, is the law: the part properly pertaining to the new man is the Gospel. The law is a doctrine which commandeth and forbiddeth, requiring, doing, and avoiding. Under it, therefore, are contained all precepts, threatenings, and promises, upon conditions of our doing, and avoiding, &c. The Gospel is a doctrine which always offereth and giveth, requiring on our behalf, not as of worthiness, or as a cause, but as a certificate unto us; and therefore under it are contained all the free and sweet promises of God.

"In those that be of years of discretion, it requireth *faith*, not as a cause, but *as an instrument* whereby we ourselves may be certain of our good husband Christ, and of His glory: and therefore when the conscience feeleth itself

disquieted for fear of God's judgment against sin, she may in no wise look upon the doctrine pertaining to the old man, but to the doctrine only that pertaineth to the new man;—not looking for that which God *requireth*, that is *faith*, because we never believe as we should; but that which He *giveth*, that is, *His grace and eternal mercy and peace in Christ*. So shall she be in quiet, when she looketh for it altogether *out of herself, in God's mercy in Christ Jesus;* in Whose lap, if she lay her head (saith St. John) then is she happy, and shall find quietness indeed. When she feeleth herself quiet, then let her look on the law, and upon such things as it requireth, *thereby to bridle and keep down the old Adam, and to slay that Goliath, from whom she must needs keep the sweet promises of the Gospel of Christ.*"

And "thus," truly adds he, "My dearly beloved, I have given you, in few words, *a sum of all the Divinity necessary for a Christian conscience.*"[1]

"And God called the dry land *Earth*," אֶרֶץ, *Eh'-retz*, which some Hebrew scholars say means *low, inferior*, others, *breaking in pieces*—both of which meanings are as applicable to the earth itself, as to that which it represents. For our origin is mean enough, and our "rocky" hearts have to be "broken in pieces" by the "hammer" of the "Word," before they can become productive ground;[2] as I shall have to shew more fully when I come to take up this subject again in subsequent chapters. And "as clay in the hands of the potter," we have to be moulded into "vessels of mercy," "vessels unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work."[3] "And *the gathering together* of the waters called He *Seas*," יָם *Yāhm*, which Gesenius says, probably means, *boiling*, or *foaming*, but which some other Hebrew scholars say, means *tumultuous*

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[1] I have had this printed as a halfpenny Tractate, and it may be had of the Book Society, London, for 3s. 6d. a hundred.

[2] Jer. xxiii. 29; Matt. xiii. 5, 8.

[3] Jer. xviii. 6; Rom. ix. 21, 23; 2 Tim. ii. 21.

—both of which meanings are again alike applicable to the sea itself, as well as to that which it symbolizes, as I shall fully shew in my next Chapter.

And here is to be noted, that the separation of the dry land from the sea took place on the third day—the number three, when used symbolically, representing Trinity, and denoting fulness of testimony:[1] for "if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God, which He hath testified of His Son."[2] And every believer having "received this testimony," is, therefore, "born of God," and has become like God;[3] and "having" thus "set to his seal that God is true,"[4] he now of course "hath the witness in himself."[5] And just as the earth was formed for the express purpose of "bringing forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind:" so is the spirit "created" anew "in Christ Jesus," that it "should bring forth fruit unto God,"[6] "to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath engraced us," ἐχαρίτωσεν, "in the Beloved."[7] And again, as we might expect, we have God's own estimate of this glorious day's work, in the words following, "And God saw that it was *good*."

And having now for some time followed the Apostle in the path opened out for us by the Holy Ghost in 2 Cor. iv. 6; and having thus so fully unfolded the analogies between the two Creations, as I shall in subsequent Chapters have to take up the subject again in detail, I will add nothing further at present beyond noting: (1) That although light was created before, yet the sun itself only appeared as a light-bearer on the fourth day; just as Jesus, the true "Sun of Righteousness," was manifested as "the light of the world,"[8]

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[1] Gen. xviii. 2; Num. vi. 23-27; Isa. vi. 3; Mat. xxviii. 19; 1 Cor. xiii. 13; Deut. xix. 15; 2 Cor. xiii. 1; Heb. x. 28.

[2] 1 John v. 9. [3] John i. 12, 13. [4] John iii. 33.

[5] 1 John v. 10. [6] Rom. vii. 4. [7] Eph. i. 6.

[8] John viii. 12; ix. 5; xii. 46.

in the four thousandth year of the Creation—for "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day;"[1] (2) That God pronounces His whole Creation alike "good," and that "on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made"[2]—that day being typical of the Millennial Rest Day, the "rest that remaineth to the people of God;"[3] (3) That on this day there is said to be *no* "evening," as on the previous other six days: for in *that* day, it is said, that "the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed, when Jehovah of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously;"[4] while of the heavenly city it is expressly said, that it "had *no need of the sun*, neither of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof;" "for there shall be *no night there;*"[5] (4) That the sea, which I shall have to shew more fully in my next Chapter, was typical of the natural heart of the unenlightened and unconverted sinner, in the first instance covered the whole earth—then had to give place to the formation and separation from it of the dry land, typical, as we have seen, of the new creation of God in the heart of a saved sinner—and lastly, will have to disappear altogether, in "a new heaven and a new earth," wherein there is to be *no more sea*"[6]—which is typical again of the "redemption of our body" in resurrection; when, perfectly free from all sin, and "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God,"[7] we shall at length be "presented faultless before the presence of" God's own "glory with exceeding joy."[8]

And then indeed will God again have to say of His *new*, what He has already said of His *old*, Creation, "And God saw *everything* that He had made, and, *behold*, it was *very good*."[9]

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[1] 2 Pet. iii. 8. [2] Gen. ii. 2. [3] Heb. iv. 9.
[4] Isa. xxiv. 23. [5] Rev. xxi. 23, 25. [6] Rev. xxi. 1.
[7] Rom. viii. 21, 23. [8] Jude 24. [9] Gen. i. 31.

And with a few remarks only on the word "Behold" in this verse, as viewed in this connexion, I will now draw this long Chapter to a close.[1]

I have stated in my First Volume of "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," that the word "*yea*," when used distinctively by the Father in the Covenant of Redemption, sets forth the part which the Father takes in that Covenant; "*verily*," when so used by the Son, the part which the Son takes in it; and "*Behold*," when so used by the Holy Ghost, the part which the Holy Ghost takes in it; or, in other words, the office which he bears towards those who are interested in it.[2] Hence whenever the Holy Ghost makes use of this word "*Behold*," He would have us to note that there is something very wonderful for us to look at; and He would, therefore, have us to direct our most earnest and prayerful attention to it. Thus, we are told that when "all the congregation of the children of Israel came into the wilderness of Sin," "on the fifteenth day of the second month" only "after their departing out of the land of Egypt," "*the whole congregation* of the children of Israel *murmured*," and said, "Would to God we had *died by the*

[1] An able writer in "The Church Missionary Intelligencer," for January, 1852—perhaps its then Editor, the late Rev. James Ridgway—who had evidently perceived these analogies, in "Thoughts for the New Year," beautifully applies the subject to the success of Missionary enterprize in the heathen world at large. He says :—"Time would fail to enumerate all the healthful and hopeful symptoms that are apparent throughout the world in connexion with Protestant Missions. There is abroad the process of *a new creation*. The Spirit of God is moving *over the face of the deep*, the *word of life* and immortality is going forth, and *light* is breaking forth *at the command of God*. By the silent action of internal forces, *a Divine and transforming energy* having been introduced, new and healthful results are being *raised out of the deep abyss* of savage life; and here and there new summits appear above the monotonous waste, on which the eye of the Christian rests with thankfulness as the precursors of more extensive formations. He Who says, 'I will work, and who shall let it?' is engaged *in the fashioning of the new creation*. 'I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.'"

[2] See Chapter x. sec. 1, pp. 475-479.

hand of Jehovah in the land of Egypt!" "*Then* said Jehovah unto Moses"—"I will rain fire and brimstone from heaven upon this people?" No, verily: but "*Behold*, I will rain *bread from heaven* for you"![1] But "Moses gave you not that bread from heaven," said Jesus to this same rebellious people; "but My Father giveth you *the true bread from heaven.* For the bread of God is He Which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."[2] "*Behold*," then, "the Lamb of God, Which taketh away the sin of the world!"[3] Need we wonder then, that those, who have received this life from Him, cry out in exulting triumph and delight, (as we have seen,) "*Behold what manner of love* the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"[4] But, oh! what an *awful* "*Behold!*" will it be to those, who despise and reject Him! "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him, all that *believe* are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. *Beware*, therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; *Behold* ye *despisers*, and *wonder*, and *perish;* for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."[5]

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[1] Exod. xvi. 1-4. [2] John vi. 32, 33. [3] John i. 29.
[4] 1 John iii. 1. [5] Acts xiii. 38-41.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DEEP.

"I stood on the shore of the beautiful sea,
As the billows were roaming wild and free;
Onward they came with unfailing force,
And backward turned in their restless course;
Ever and ever sounded their roar,
Foaming and dashing against the shore;
Ever and ever they rose and fell,
With heaving and sighing and mighty swell;
And deep seemed calling aloud to deep,
Lest the murmuring waves should drop to sleep.
In summer and winter, by night and by day,
Thro' cloud and sunshine holding their way;
Oh! when shall the ocean's troubled breast
Calmly and quietly sink into rest?
Oh! when shall the waves' wild murmuring cease,
And the mighty waters be hushed to peace?
It cannot be quiet—it cannot rest;
There must be heaving on Ocean's breast:
The tide must ebb, and the tide must flow,
Whilst the changing seasons come and go.
Still from the depths of that hidden store
There are treasures tossed up along the shore;
Tossed by the billows—then seized again—
Carried away by the rushing main.
Oh! strangely glorious and beautiful sea!
Sounding for ever mysteriously,
Why are thy billows still rolling on,
With their wild and sad and musical tone?
Why is there never repose for thee?
Why slumberest thou not, oh, mighty sea?"

"I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith Jehovah; and I will heal him. But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."—ISA. lvii. 19-21.

"They have heard evil tidings; they are faint-hearted: there is sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet."—JER. xlix. 23.

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and Hades delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."—REV. xx. 13-15.

THE reader will have observed that, although I have written largely upon the work of Creation, as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, I have said but little upon "the sea" and "the dry land" themselves, beyond noting what they individually symbolize: but as I am now coming to detail, I shall have to take up this subject more particularly; and in shewing how wonderfully God's dealings in nature harmonize with, and illustrate, His dealings in Grace, I shall keep as near as I can to the order of the Creation in Genesis; although it will of course only be possible for me to consider a limited number of instances—the subject itself being too vast to be discoursed upon in a single volume.

We will commence then, with the sea, or, as it is called in Genesis, "the deep," which in the first instance covered the entire "face of the earth;" and which, as we have seen, symbolized the natural unconverted heart of the sinner: for, as one of the Scriptures at the heading of this chapter states, "the wicked," or, unconverted, "*are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest,* whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith My God, to the wicked." Hence we have this symbol uniformly used with this object in view, throughout the entire Word. Thus when "one of the seven angels pointed out to the Apostle "the great whore" or that corrupt Ecclesiastico-commercial system of iniquity, which has yet to enslave the peoples on the platform of the old Roman earth, he depicts her as "sitting upon many waters;" and "*the waters,*" he says, "which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are *peoples,* and

multitudes, and *nations*, and *tongues*."[1] So again, when our Lord would symbolize the preaching of the Gospel among the nations of the earth, He likens it "unto a net, that was *cast into the sea*" of Adam humanity, and "gathered" out of it—not all that was in the sea, but—"some of every kind," *i.e.*, "of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues":[2] and then, when the net "was full," they "drew" it "to shore, and sat down;" and, a discrimination being made, they "gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be," says He, "at the end of the age: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just; and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."[3] In like manner, when Daniel describes the rise of the four great world-powers, to whom Jehovah successively committed the sovereignty of the earth, after Israel's failure to govern for Him, he describes them, as "four great beasts *coming up from the sea*"[4]—that sea, not only symbolizing in this case, the peoples over whom they ruled; but also indicating the sea itself around which they ruled, *i.e.*, the Mediterranean: for none of these Empires became supreme, until they had not only subdued, but incorporated into their Empires, the whole of the nations which bordered that sea, as well as every island, which studded its waters.[5] And so when Nebuchadnezzar, the head of the first Empire, with his mighty army beseiged the merchant city of Tyre, the prophet thus symbolizes the event. "Therefore, thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, *as the sea causeth his waves to come up*"[6]—"when I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; when I shall *bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover*

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[1] Rev. xvii. 1, 15. [2] Rev. vii. 9. [3] Mat. xiii. 47-50. [4] Dan. vii. 3.

[5] See the first vol. of the Writer's "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," where this subject is largely gone into, Chaps. vii. and viii., pp. 292-401.

[6] Ezek. xxvi. 3.

thee."[1] Again, when Cyrus, the head of the second Empire, besieged Babylon, the prophet thus announces it, "Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her"—"*The sea is come up upon Babylon:* she is *covered with the multitude of the waves thereof.*"[2] So in like manner, when God's people Israel forsook Him, and put their trust in man; He predicted their subjection to other nations for their hurt, in the words following, "Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son; now therefore, behold the Lord *bringeth up upon them the waters of the river,* strong and many, even the King of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: and he shall pass through Judah; *he shall overflow and go over;* he shall reach even to the neck: and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of Thy land, O Immanuel"[3] —a passage, which in its exhaustive meaning refers to the future personal individual Antichrist, whom another prophet has described as exulting in his universal supremacy over the nations of the earth, in the following vain-glorious strain, "I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, *in the midst of the seas.*"[4]

There are wonderful analogies likewise between the sea, and the nations of the earth in other respects; many of which are also pointed out to us in the Scriptures themselves. Thus in predicting the last great troubles against Israel, the prophets speak as follows, "Thus saith Jehovah, Behold, a people cometh from the north country, and *a great nation* shall be raised from the sides of the earth. They shall lay hold on bow and spear; *they are cruel, and have no mercy; their voice roareth like the sea;* and they ride upon horses, set in array as men for war against thee, O daughter of Zion. We have heard of the fame thereof:

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[1] Ezek. xxvi. 19.
[2] Jer. li. 27, 42.
[3] Isa. viii. 6-8.
[4] Ezek. xxviii. 2.

our hands wax feeble: anguish hath taken hold of us, and pain, as of a woman in travail."[1] "And He will lift up an ensign to *the nations* from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly: none shall be weary nor stumble among them: none shall slumber nor sleep." "They shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry it away safe, and none shall deliver it. And in that day *they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea;* and if one look unto the land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof."[2] Nevertheless, how much soever "the floods" shall "lift up their voice," shall "lift up their waves;" "Jehovah on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea;"[3] He "*ruleth* the raging of the sea;" so that "when the waves thereof arise," He "stilleth them:"[4] and as He once "made the depths of the sea a way for" His "ransomed" ones "to pass over:"[5] so has He promised to "bring" His people "*again from the depths of the sea.*"[6] And hence we read of their final deliverance, in the following graphic description of the mighty Antichristian hosts as they sweep down from the plains of Esdraelon to the valley of Jehoshaphat, there to be destroyed by the avenging hand of the Lord Jesus, when He "comes to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day."[7] "Hark, *the multitude of many peoples! Like the roaring of the ocean they roar.* Hark, the rush of nations! Like the rushing of mighty waters they rush. The nations like the rushing of many waters shall rush: but he shall rebuke it, and it shall flee far away, and be chased, like the chaff of mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind. At even time behold *terror;* before

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[1] Jer. vi. 22-24.
[2] Isa. v. 26, 27, 29, 30.
[3] Psa. xciii. 3, 4.
[4] Psa. lxxxix. 9.
[5] Isa. li. 10.
[6] Psa. lxviii. 22.
[7] 2 Thes. i. 10. See Joel iii. 1, 2, 9-17.

the morning *he is not.* This is the portion of them that rob us, and the lot of them that spoil us."[1]

Again we are told, that "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man."[2] "Unstable as water," said Jacob of his son Reuben, "thou shalt not excel."[3] "For he that wavereth, is *like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed.* For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."[4] While we read of some, who are like "*raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame.*"[5] But what is it that makes the sea so "tempestuous?"[6] Is it not because of "*a great wind that blew?*"[7] Now *wind,* when used symbolically, denotes a spiritual influence, either good, or bad. Thus it is employed, (1) as an emblem of the Holy Spirit, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."[8] "Awake, O north wind: and come, thou south; blow upon my garden that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into His garden, and eat His pleasant fruits."[9] And (2) of the holy angels: for we read that "the ungodly" "are like the chaff which the wind driveth away;"[10] which the parallel passage thus explains, "let them be as chaff *before the wind:* and *let the angel of the Lord* chase them."[11]

When, however, the figure is applied to that "stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves" of the great "deep,"[12] *that* wind then represents Satan, "the prince *of the power of the air,* the spirit that now energizeth in the children of disobedience."[13] Hence when Job was "delivered unto

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[1] Isa. xvii. 12-14, Mr. B. W. Newton's translation. See Chaps. viii. and ix. of the Writer's second vol. of "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," pp. 417-519.

[2] Prov. xxvii. 19. [3] Gen. xlix. 3. [4] James i. 6.
[5] Jude 13. [6] Jonah i. 11. [7] John vi. 18.
[8] John iii. 8. [9] Cant. iv. 16. [10] Psa. i. 4.
[11] Psa. xxxv. 5. See also Isa. xli. 16; Dan. ii. 35. [12] Psa. cvii. 24, 25.
[13] Eph. ii. 2.

Satan for the destruction of the flesh;"[1] he thus complains to the Lord, "*Thou liftest me up to the wind;*" "terrors are turned upon me; they pursue my soul as the wind; and my welfare passeth away as a cloud."[2] And evil men are, therefore, compared to "clouds that are without water, *carried about of winds*"[3] "tossed to and fro, and carried about of every wind of doctrine;"[4] "giving heed to *seducing spirits*, and doctrines of *demons*."[5] And then, "walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaking great swelling words of vanity;"[6] "*the deep utters his voice*, and lifteth up his hands on high"[7]—a passage which is characterised by wonderfully bold and beautiful imagery: for the prophet here vividly brings before us two mighty waves of the sea, which, while rising up, he compares to the two analogous folds, which a loose Eastern garment would assume, were its wearer suddenly to lift up his hands on high; and like the sea itself, in a roaring voice to utter forth words of furious heat and anger!

And what *saith that* voice? Does it speak forth words of wisdom, or of truth? "What saith the Scripture?" "But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? *Man knoweth not* the price thereof; *neither is it found in the land of the living. The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me.*"[8] Not that the depth, or the sea, saith so in so many words, or will indeed admit the fact: on the contrary, as we have seen, it denies it: "for vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt:"[9] but it says so, in its "actions, which speak louder than words." Thus the wise man says, "A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with *a froward mouth*. He winketh with his eyes, *he*

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[1] 1 Cor. v. 5. See the Writer's "Personality and History of Satan," pp. 165-187.

[2] Job xxx. 15, 22. [3] Jude 12. [4] Eph. iv. 14.

[5] 1 Tim. iv. 1. [6] Jude 16. See also 2 Pet. ii. 18.

[7] Hab. iii. 10. [8] Job xxviii. 12-14. [9] Job xi. 12.

speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers."[1] Therefore, "when he *speaketh fair*, believe him not; for there are *seven abominations in his heart.*"[2] Hence there are two kinds of wisdom, "the wisdom of this world,"[3] and "the wisdom that is from above"[4]—both indeed seeking to accomplish their ends in the readiest way: but as the one only respects this world, which is to "perish with the using,"[5] it is of course "foolishness with God;"[6] and the other alone is the true, or real wisdom; as coming from God Himself, Who is "only wise:"[7] for true wisdom is the accomplishment of the end proposed, not only in the most efficient manner, but with a beneficent object in view as well.[8] Hence God tells us that Satan, as well as men, are wise *in some respects:* but not of course *truly wise.* And so we read that "the serpent"—here comprehending also Satan himself, who used its body for the purpose of "beguiling Eve through his knavish villainy," *πανουργία*[9]—"was more subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made."[10] And our Lord therefore counsels His disciples to "be *wise as serpents,*" while at the same time He would have them to be as "harmless as doves."[11] He tells them likewise, that "the children of this age are in their generation *wiser* than the children of light;"[12] because they live only for it, which the others do not: but they have *no true wisdom:* for "*they* are" only "*wise to do evil,* but to do good *they have no* knowledge."[13] Hence the Apostle says, "Let no man *deceive* himself." For "if any man

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[1] Prov. vi. 12, 13. [2] Prov. xxvi. 25. [3] 1 Cor. i. 20.
[4] James iii. 17. [5] Col. ii. 22. [6] 1 Cor. iii. 19.
[7] Rom. xvi. 27; 1 Tim. i. 17; Jude 25.

[8] Knowledge differs from Wisdom in this respect; that, whereas Knowledge is the acquisition of facts, Wisdom is the application of the knowledge thus acquired to right ends, as well as for beneficent purposes. Every skilful adaptation of Knowledge to a proposed end may, therefore, be *called* wisdom in a certain sense, but it is not *true* wisdom, unless it be applied *to a right end, and for a beneficent purpose.*

[9] 2 Cor. xi. 3. [10] Gen. iii. 1. [11] Mat. x. 16.
[12] Luke xvi. 8. [13] Jer. iv. 22.

among you *seemeth* to be *wise in this world*, let him become *a fool*, that he *may be wise*."[1] For only the truly "wise shall inherit glory; but shame shall be the promotion of fools."[2]

But the sea is not only exposed to the fury of the wind: it has a mighty "serpent" coiled up, if I may so say, at "the bottom" of it;[3] and all the more deadly, because it does not always shew itself at the surface. And does not "that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan,"[4] hold possession of the hearts of the unconverted? Does not our Lord liken him to "a strong man," in peaceful possession of "his house," the poor sinner's heart[5]—"leading him captive" "at his will?"[6] And then, when he comes up to the surface, he reveals himself in his true colours, as "a dragon"—"the great dragon,"[7] pre-eminently so-called, no doubt because of his awful strength, power, fierceness and fury; as well as from the ease with which, when unopposed by God, he can swallow up and devour the souls of men—"lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver:"[8] for "as a roaring lion" also, we are told, "he walketh about seeking whom he may devour."[9]

"It is as a dragon, that he stirs up, as well as strengthens and upholds, persecuting rulers in their fiendish attempt to root out and destroy the people of God: by reason of which they are sometimes called dragons themselves: because they act under him as such. Thus 'Pharaoh King of Egypt' was called (partly in allusion no doubt to the crocodile, and to the river Nile) 'the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself.'[10] And the destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts in the Red Sea is thus described in the Book of Psalms, 'Thou didst divide the sea by Thy strength; Thou breakest the heads of the dragons in the waters. Thou breakest the heads of Leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to

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[1] 1 Cor. iii. 18. [2] Prov. iii. 35. [3] Amos ix. 3. [4] Rev. xx. 2.
[5] Mat. xii. 29; Mark iii. 27; Luke xi. 21. [6] 2 Tim. ii. 26.
[7] Rev. xii. 9. [8] Psa. vii. 2. [9] 1 Peter v. 8. [10] Ezek. xxix. 3.

be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.'[1] Here not only Pharaoh himself is referred to, but Satan also: who upheld him against the people of Israel; and who was necessarily discomfited in his discomfiture; having equally lost his power over the people likewise. We have a similar reference in the Book of the prophet Isaiah, where the prophet, anticipating the prayer of the repentant Israelites, who are represented as entreating Jehovah to deliver them from the power and tyranny of Antichrist, and reminding Him of their former deliverance by Him out of Egypt, vehemently cry out, 'Awake, awake, put on strength; O arm of Jehovah; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art Thou not it that hath cut Rahab' (Egypt), 'and wounded the dragon? Art Thou not it which dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over? Therefore the redeemed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head; they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.'[2] And this reference to the dragon, under the circumstances, is strictly in point, and exceedingly appropriate: because we learn from the Revelation, that it was Satan himself, *as 'the dragon,'* who 'gave' Antichrist 'his power, and his throne, and great authority:'[3] and where it is said likewise of Antichrist's minister, who was also the minister of Satan, that he too 'spake as a dragon.'[4] "[5]

Yes: it is in this great sea of fallen Adam humanity, wherein this "great dragon" disports himself, and which, like Pharaoh, King of Egypt, who represented him, he calls, and which, alas! is but too much, *his own;* boastingly adding, "and *I have made it for myself.*"[6] And in the midst of this sea he glories to exercise, as well as to exhibit, his

[1] Psa. lxxiv. 13, 14. [2] Isa. li. 9-11. [3] Rev. xiii. 2.
[4] Rev. xiii. 11.
[5] From the Writer's "Personality and History of Satan," pp. 23-25.
[6] Ezek. xxix. 3.

terrible strength and power: for like "the leviathan," who represents him, and by whose name he is called,[1] he but too often makes "the deep to boil like a pot;" yea, "he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment. He maketh a path to shine after him; one would think the deep to be hoary. Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride."[2] "His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone."[3] Alas! how often does this "great dragon" stir up and agitate this restless, stormy, and tempestuous sea! And although this "enemy" has been "cast out" of the hearts of the Lord's own people,[4] yet when God permits, as we see in the case of Job, and as we shall see also farther on, when I come to speak of "hurricanes," he can, by his "windy storm and tempest,"[5] fearfully stir up the sea in *their* hearts likewise. And then is it, when *their* "sea" is thus "tossed with waves," that "*the wind*" *is* "*contrary*" *to them*:[6] for it is "now dark, and Jesus" has "not come to them."[7] And now their "iniquities, like the wind," seem almost to themselves to "take" even them "away;"[8] and they feelingly cry out, "Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me."[9] Ah! those who go down deep into their nature's evil, "that do business in great waters; these see the works of Jehovah, and His wonders in the deep. For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then they cry unto Jehovah in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are

[1] Psa. lxxiv. 14; Isa. xxvii. 1. [2] Job xli. 31-34. [3] Job xli. 24.
[4] Zeph. iii. 17; Mat. xii. 23; Mark iii. 27; Luke xi. 21, 22.
[5] Psa. lv. 8. [6] Mat. xiv. 24. [7] John vi. 17.
[8] Isa. lxiv. 6. [9] Psa. lxix. 15.

they glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven. Oh that men would praise Jehovah for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"[1] And now they know, not only that "Jehovah on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea;"[2] but that His "*way* is in the sea, and" His "*path* in the great waters, and" His "footsteps are not known;"[3] and that "many waters cannot quench" His "love, neither can the floods drown it:"[4] for His love is free, and perfect, and boundless, and everlasting.

But what is it that makes this evil one so great? Ah! it is "*the waters*" that have "made him great." It is "*the deep*" that has thus "set him up on high."[5] Were it not for "the motions of sins," which "did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death,"[6] he would have had no power over us; and were these sins "subdued" in all hearts, he would soon lose his dominion over "the kingdoms of this world," which are yet destined to "become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ."[7] When "the prince of this world" came to our glorious Head, he was powerless; because he found "nothing in" Him to work upon;[8] for *He* was "holy, harmless, undefiled," and "separate from sinners;"[9] and "in Him is no sin."[10]

And blessed be God, this "great dragon," is not always to have this great Adamic sea to himself: for as the last of his tyrannical persecutors, the Antichrist of "the last days" "shall come to his end, and none shall help him:"[11] so shall he. We have a forshadowing of this in what took place on the lake and shores of Galilee; when, after there had been "a great tempest in the sea," and Jesus had "rebuked *the winds* and *the sea*; and there was a great calm;" he cast many "*demons*" out of two "possessed with them," "who were exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way;" when "the man marvelled,

[1] Psa. cvii. 23-31. [2] Psa. xciii. 4. [3] Psa. lxxvii. 19. See also Nahum. i. 3.
[4] Cant. viii. 7. [5] Ezek. xxxi. 4. [6] Rom. vii. 5. [7] Rev. xi. 15.
[8] John xiv. 30. [9] Heb. vii. 26. [10] 1 John iii. 5. [11] Dan. ix. 45.

saying, what manner of man is this, that even *the winds* and *the sea obey Him*"?[1] Yes: "He that made him can make His sword to approach unto him":[2] And "in *that* day Jehovah with His sore and great and strong sword shall punish Leviathan the piercing," or, wriggling, "serpent, even Leviathan that crooked," or, tortuous, "serpent; and He shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."[3] For "I saw," says John, "an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the abyss," *i.e.*, Sheol, or Hadees, "and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the abyss, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."[4] And then will be fulfilled the promise, "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet:"[5] for "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."[6] And then "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain," saith Jehovah: "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea."[7]

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[1] Mat. viii. 24-28. [2] Job xl. 19. [3] Isa. xxvii. 1.
[4] Rev. xx. 1-3. [5] Psa. xci. 13. [6] Rom. xvi. 20.
[7] Isa. xi. 9. Should the reader desire to look further into this subject, he is referred to the Writer's "Personality and History of Satan" (S. W. Partridge & Co.).

CHAPTER V.

THE DEEP—continued.

"I have heard the awful song
  Which the sea is ever singing;
The tender merciless song,
  Which to all lands is ringing:
'Come unto me,'
Saith the awful Sea,
'And I will give you rest.

. . . . . .

A little struggle at first, of course,
  A little gasping for one more breath,
A little agony,—nothing worse,—
  And then the long sweet sleep of death?'
This is the awful song
  Which the Sea is ever singing;
The tender, merciless song,
  Which to all the lands is ringing.
Oh! the Ocean murdereth tenderly,
  With soft blue waves which a child might love:—
Only they creep so *very* near,
  And close *so* strongly above;—
Gently forcing the struggles by,
  Gently stealing away the breath,
Gently closing the mouth and eye,
  Till the struggling face grows white in death.
And then when the strong and terrible Sea
  Hath wrought its awful will,
It catcheth the poor form to its breast
  And husheth it very still;
In the winding waters waving flow,
Swaying it softly to and fro
As the smiles of the great Sea come and go,
With a hushing, tender, motherly motion,
The awful, tender, merciless ocean,
  And singing the old, old song,
  Which the Sea hath chanted long:
'It is better to die than to live,
It is sweeter to sleep than to grieve,—
  So death is the kiss I give.'

"Out on a wild and mournful Sea,
Where the waters are struggling heavily—
Where the sorrows of death are pressing nigh,
As the lights go out in the awful sky—
We wrestle against the wind and tide,
We wrestle in anguish storm-defied.

. . . . . .

I struggle across the angry sea
To the Home of the heart where I would be;
Let me enter the Haven calm and fair,
But let my Beloved be also there!

. . . . . .

And some shall enter the Haven wide,
Full-sail, on the breast of a glorious tide;
And some shall come
To our golden Home
Sore battered and spent from an angry sea;
But thine heart shall count them, one by one,
And leap for joy as they greet the Sun,
Till God has gathered them all to thee."

"Oh! many a dream was in the ship
An hour before her death;
And sights of home with sighs disturb'd
The sleeper's long-drawn breath.
Instead of the murmur of the sea
The sailor heard the humming tree
Alive through all its leaves,
The hum of the spreading sycamore
That grew before his cottage door,
And the swallow's song in the eaves.
His arms enclosed a blooming boy,
Who listen'd with tears of sorrow and joy
To the dangers his father had pass'd;
And his wife—by turns she wept and smil'd,
As she look'd on the father of her child,
Return'd to her heart at last.
—He wakes at the vessel's sudden roll
And the rush of waters is in his soul."

"Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell—
Then shriek'd the timid, and stood still the brave—
Then some leap'd overboard with dreadful yell,
As eager to anticipate their grave;

And the sea roared around her like a hell,
  And down she suck'd with her the whirling wave
Like one who grapples with his enemy,
  And strives to strangle him before he die.

"And first one universal shriek there rush'd,
  Louder than the loud Ocean, like a crash
Of echoing thunder; and then all was hushed
  Save the wild wind and the remorseless dash
Of billows; but at intervals there gush'd,
  Accompanied with a convulsive splash,
A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry
  Of some strong swimmer in his agony."

"Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth? Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death."—JOB xxxviii. 16, 17.

"Behold, He spreadeth His light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the sea."—JOB xxxvi. 30.

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."—LUKE xxi. 25, 26.

"And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea."—ZECH. x. 11.

He "stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people."—PSA. lxv. 7.

UNDER whatever aspect we may view the sea, whether in its calm and silent moods, or when lashed into fury by a terrific gale, to the eye of sense, there always seems to be something grand and beautiful about it: and yet is it not at all times cruel, treacherous and deceitful? And is not this true also of that "world," which "lieth in the wicked one;"[1] which it but too faithfully represents? To the "carnal mind" indeed, which is "enmity" itself "against God,"[2] the world is attractive and fascinating, nay even bewitching in its aspect. The careless live for it; the young and hopeful eagerly pursue its bright, yet fleeting shadows; while the

[1] 1 John v. 19. [2] Rom. viii. 7.

ambitious paint it to their imaginations in the most gorgeous and attractive of colours. But nevertheless, it is fickle, hollow, cruel, and deceitful. The Spirit Himself, it is true, has told us that there are "*pleasures* in sin" to the unconverted soul: but He has also warned us that they are "but for a season."[1] Hence His solemn caution of, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."[2] Oh! "this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts!"[3] how wonderful and unsearchable it is! And is that unquiet, restless sea, which it typifies, less wonderful and unsearchable?[4] And are there not in *this* sea also "*things creeping innumerable;*"[5] aye, and "both *small* and *great beasts*" likewise, as the Spirit Himself has taught us in the Word?[6]

And how truly does water itself represent the unstable, impressionless character of the natural heart! Two of the "three things," which were "too wonderful" for the wise man to solve, and which he "knew not," were "the way of a serpent upon a rock;"[7] and "the way of a ship in the midst of the sea:"[8] because it leaves no trace behind it. "Some men," says Cecil, "assent to everything which we propose. They will even anticipate us. And yet we see that they mean nothing. I have often felt when with such persons: 'I would they could be brought to contradict and oppose! That would lead to discussion. God might, peradventure, dash the stony heart to pieces. *But this heart is like water. The impression dies as soon as it is made.*' I

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[1] Heb. xi. 25. [2] 1 John ii. 15-17. [3] Psa. civ. 25.
[4] Jer. xvii. 9, 10. [5] 2 Tim. iii. 6; Jude 4. [6] Dan. vii. 2-12; Rev. xiii.
[7] See Mat. xiii. 4, 5, 19; Mark iv. 4, 5, 15; Luke viii. 5, 6, 12.
[8] Prov. xxx. 19.

have sought for such views as might rouse and stir up opposition. I have tried to irritate the torpid mind. But all in vain. I once visited a young clergyman of this character, who was seized with a dangerous illness at a coffee-house in town, whither some business had brought him: the first time I saw him we conversed very closely together; and, in the prospect of death he seemed solicitous to prepare for it. But I could make no sort of impression upon him: all I could possibly say met his entire approbation, though I saw his heart felt no interest in it. When I visited him a second time, the fear of death was gone; and, with it, all solicitude about religion. He was still civil and grateful, but he tried to parry off the business on which he knew I came. 'I will shew you, Sir, some little things with which I have worn away the hours of my confinement and solitude.' He brought out a quantity of pretty and tasty drawings. I was at a loss how to express, with suitable force and delicacy, the high sense I felt of his indecorum and insipidity, and to leave a deep impression on his conscience: I rose, however, instantly—said my time was expired—wished him well, and withdrew."[1]

And as we gaze upon the placid bosom of the deep *blue* sea, which seems to say to us, "See, how gentle and *merciful* I am!"[2] or watch the dancing light upon the waves, now laughing and rippling in the sunshine; we can hardly imagine it to be so cruel; or that changes so sudden and unexpected could pass over it—that it could so soon be stirred up to such destructive wrath, as those wrecked vessels cast upon the rocks do testify! Look at those rocks themselves, worn into every possible grotesque and fantastic shape by the fierce waves from the open sea, which dash

[1] Cecil's Works. Vol. ii. Remains. On visiting sick beds, pp. 474, 475.

[2] In my first Vol. of "The Hidden Mystery" I have shewn that *blue* is emblematical of *mercy*. But *the sea* is a sea of *many* colours: although *none* of them are *real*, or *constant*. Thus we hear of the *yellow* sea—yellow being emblematical (as I have also shewn) of *love*: for "if ye were of *the world*, the world would *love* his own: but because ye are *not* of the world,

over them so frequently. What a tale they tell! Nay, while we have been looking at them, the wind seems to have suddenly risen: for huge waves are beginning to boil over the river bar, and mount the low cliffs; while a heavy sea comes rolling in, and ships that are even safely moored, begin to toss and roll about right merrily; and great smooth mountains of sea cause tremendous waves to topple over, and break along the shore.

But nevertheless the sea *is* cruel, whether it be in the calm of sunshine, or in the fury of the tempest: and poets have often written, sometimes very touchingly, to illustrate these its traits.[1] I picture to myself a group of merry children, playing on the sand. They are in a little bay, surrounded on three of its sides by precipitous cliffs, and open on the

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but I have chosen you out of the world, *therefore* the world *hateth* you" (John xv. 19). Sometime the sea assumes a *green* colour, which I have also shewn to be emblematical of the *Divine Covenant:* but no unconverted professor, so dying is ever interested *in that.* And in one semi-barbarous country, that professes to be peculiarly *holy;* it has on its north, the *White* Sea—white being an emblem of *purity;* and on its south, the *Black* Sea—black being the emblem of *ignorance* and *darkness.* While in the *Red* Sea so-called—red being typical of *judgment*—God executed judgment upon Pharaoh and all his hosts. And although the above may of course be said to be *fanciful:* yet it *illustrates* the subject nevertheless.

[1] Take the following well-known, touching ballad as an example.

I.

"O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
Across the sands o' Dee;
The western wind was wild and dank wi' foam,
And all alone went she.

II.

"The creeping tide came up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see;
The blinding mist came down and hid the land—
And never home came she.

other to the incursions of the sea. It is dotted here and there with low jutting rocks, peeping above the sand, and upon which the children are playing and dancing with rapturous delight and glee. Suddenly they become aware of "the creeping tide," which has been coming slowly in, and which has just cut off their retreat. Now fully realizing their danger, they become wild with terror, and their

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III.

"Oh, is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress o' golden hair,
O' drowned maiden's hair,
Above the nets at sea?
Was ever salmon yet that shone so fair,
Among the stakes on Dee.

IV.

"They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel crawling foam,
The cruel hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea:
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home,
Across the sands o' Dee."

Miss Jean Ingelow has also written a very touching and pathetic poem upon "the high tide on the coast of Lincolnshire," in the year 1571: which is too long to quote; but from which I will give a few stanzas, by way of example.

"Alle fresh the level pasture lay,
And not a shadow mote be scene,
Save where full fyve good miles away
The steeple towered from out the greene;
And lo! the great bell farre and wide
Was heard in all that country side
That Saturday at eventide.

. . . . . .

"I looked without, and lo! my sonne
Came riding downe with might and main:
He raised a shout as he drew on,
Till all the welkin rang again,
'Elizabeth! Elizabeth!'
(A sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my sonne's wife, Elizabeth).

laughter is turned into shrieks of horror and despair. But it is too late; and there are none within hearing distance. In their agony, they huddle together, and cling to one another, as if for succour and support: but the advancing tide heeds them not; and with the sunlight flashing upon its waters, it laughingly enfolds them in its watery embrace, and hugs them unto death. For now the "cruel," waves come rolling in, and lick them off their little rocky eminence; and tossing them up and down in sport, and

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"'The olde sea wall (he cried) is downe,
The rising tide comes on apace,
And boats adrift in yonder towne
Go sailing up the market-place.'
He shook as one that looks on death:
'God save you, mother!' straight he saith;
'Where is my wife, Elizabeth?'

"'Good sonne, where Lindis winds away,
With her two bairns I marked her long;
And ere yon bells beganne to play
Afar I heard her milking song.'
He looked across the grassy lea,
To right, to left, 'Ho Enderby!'
They rang 'The Brides of Enderby!'

"With that he cried and beat his breast;
For, lo! along the river's bed
A mighty eygre reared his crest,
And uppe the Lindis raging sped,
It swept with thunderous noises loud;
Shaped like a curling snow-white cloud,
Or like a demon in a shroud.

. . . . . .

"And didst thou visit him no more?
Thou didst, thou didst, my daughter deare;
The waters laid thee at his doore,
Ere yet the early dawn was clear.
Thy pretty bairns in fast embrace,
The lifted sun shone on thy face,
Downe drifted to thy dwelling-place."

. . . . . .

dashing them against each other, and against the rocks around, they at length entomb them, in the waters—after having driven their little life quite out of them. And now having finished their sport, they at length retire from the little bay as they came in; leaving the poor little bruised and battered bodies a piteous, ghastly sight upon the strand!

Oh! cruel, cruel sea! Can there be anything to equal thee in this? Alas; there can indeed; aye, and to surpass thee in it also. Does not the heart of him, who hath felt something of "the powers of the world to come,"[1] often bleed, when he sees little children brought up as holocausts for some idol of the world; or nurtured in a faith that is cruel, deadly, aye, and even damnable! I knew a lady who most deeply and earnestly inculcated upon her children the necessity, if they would get on in the world, when they went into "Society," *so-called*, of considering themselves superior to every person to whom they might be introduced, and of acting accordingly. Can it be wondered that all her children grew up to be haughty, proud, overbearing and self-asserting! Little did she imagine that she was hanging a moral "millstone" "round" their "necks," under which, if it were not removed while there was hope, they would go down unto death and be "drowned in the depth of the sea."[2] For "a proud look" "doth Jehovah hate:" for it is "an abomination unto Him."[3] And "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble:"[4] while He charges His own people to "be clothed with humility,"[5] and to "mind *not* high things," but to "condescend to men of low estate."[6]

A lady, who is the only one among her relations who knows the Lord, told me that several years ago, when she herself was in the dark, one of her sisters-in-law, who had been a very worldly person, delighting in the attractions of the ball-room, and in frequenting fashionable entertainments

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[1] Heb. vi. 5. [2] Mat. xviii. 6. [3] Prov. vi. 16, 17.
[4] James iv. 6. [5] 1 Pet. v. 5. [6] Rom. xii. 16.

of various kinds, was suddenly seized with a dangerous illness; and then perceiving that the tide was coming rapidly in upon her, and that death was staring her in the face, she became seriously alarmed, as her conscience now began to accuse her of wasted time and opportunities; and she then perceived, when too late, that her past life had been but an evil preparation for an awful eternity, which seemed now to her to be close at hand. Her relations and friends tried to reason her out of her fears, assuring her that she would soon be all right again, and would once again join with them in the gay festivities of the world; but it was in vain.

"Come, come," said they, "pray don't give way to such foolish fancies; it will retard your recovery."

But she knew better.

"No, no," she said; "I can't bear to think of these things now. Can't you get me a tract? Oh! *do* get me a tract! get me a tract."

"Nonsense, nonsense," they said; "here," said one of them, "I will read you a little bit from this last novel; it will amuse you."

"Oh! *don't, don't,*" she urged; again repeating in an agonized tone, "Get me a tract: *do* get me a tract."

But no: they could not be persuaded of her danger, neither would they listen to her earnest entreaties for some soul help: for "they knew not the Lord" themselves. And so the creeping tide came on, and she was at length, it is much to be feared, *engulfed* in *that* awful sea, in which, if any poor lost sinner be "*drowned,*" *it will never again give up* ITS *dead!* Oh! "*the tender mercies* of the wicked," or, unconverted, "are *cruel,*"[1] even when they know it not!

But as there are degrees of depths in the sea, one part being much deeper than another, some parts of it indeed being so deep, that they have never even yet been fathomed: so is

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[1] Prov. xxi. 27.

it with the hearts of the children of men. "The sacrifice of the wicked," or unconverted, we are told, "is abomination:" but "how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind."[1] Nay: this holds good even in the case of demons: for our Blessed Lord has told us, that "when the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits *more wicked than himself*, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."[2] And alas! I can furnish a sad instance of an awful depth of human depravity, which, I trust, can have but few parallels in a so-called civilized country: for when I was Under-Sheriff of the County of Lincoln, at one of the Assizes held there in the Castle, two criminals were arraigned, a man and his wife, for poisoning the mother of one of them (I forget which); for the purpose of getting possession of her property; and they did it under the mask of kindness; for when she became ill, in consequence of the doses of poison they had given her; they diabolically and hypocritically feigned to sympathize with her; told her how sorry they were to see her in such suffering, and said that they would give her something to make her better—administering to her, on each occasion some further doses of the poison, mixed up with her food, until they had at length accomplished their hellish and deadly purpose. They were utterly hardened and callous—the man making a remark to one of the officers of the Court, during an interval when the judge retired to lunch, in an offhand and indifferent manner, of "what a nice Court you have got here!" The judge seemed quite deceived by the accounts given of their *seeming* kindness to the old woman in her illness; and to the great disgust of the Chief Constable, who knew the parties well,

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[1] Prov. xxi. 27. [2] Mat. xii. 43-45.

he made the Jury bring in a verdict of manslaughter, instead of murder: so that these diabolical wretches actually got off the extreme penalty of the law, which they had so richly deserved for a term of imprisonment only! And oh! what a dreadful depth of iniquity does not such a case as this reveal? And the Scriptures tell us that all hearts are *by nature alike;* and that "whosoever *hateth his brother* is a *murderer,*" *in embryo:* "and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."[1] Nay, "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him."[2] "We know that *we* have passed from death unto life, because we *love* the brethren. He that loveth *not* his brother abideth in death."[3] Possibly some of my readers may imagine that they could never by possibility be guilty of crimes of any kind, much less of the crime of murder! So *thought* Hazael, when Elisha told him of all the evil he would do unto Israel. "But what!" said he, "Is thy servant *a dog*, that he should do this great thing!"[4] But *the dog did it!* So thought *not*, however, the martyred Bradford: for when *he* saw a criminal led out for execution, he exclaimed, "But for the grace of God, *there goes John Bradford!*" "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."[5] And let all of us cry mightily unto God, in the words of the Prayer of our Psalm, "*Who can understand his errors?* Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; *let them not have dominion over me:* then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight. O Jehovah, my strength and my Redeemer."[6]

But never does this moral sea exhibit greater or more

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[1] 1 John iii. 15. [2] 1 John ii. 9, 10. [3] 1 John iii. 14.
[4] 2 Kings viii. 13. [5] 1 Cor. x. 12. [6] Psa. xix. 12-14.

refined cruelty, if I may so say, than when its fiendish cruelty is exercised towards "the beloved of the Lord," who suffer under it, for the Lord's own glory, and "for conscience sake." Take the following as an example, where we see *the two seas*, if I may so say, *acting together and in concert!* "In the reign of Charles II., Margaret Wilson, a girl of eighteen, along with an aged widow of sixty-three, named Margaret M'Lachland, was adjudged to die, *because she refused to acknowledge the supremacy of any other than Christ in the Church!* The sentence pronounced against them was, that they should be fastened to stakes driven deep into the oozy sand that covers the beach, *and left to perish in the rising tide.* The stake to which the aged female was fastened, was further down the beach than that of the young woman, in order that, being soonest destroyed, her expiring sufferings might shake the firmness of faith of Margaret Wilson. The tide began to flow—the waters swelled; they mounted from the knee to the waist, and from the waist to the chin, and from the chin to the lip of the venerable matron, and when she was almost stifled by the rising tide, when the bubbling groan of her last agony was reaching her fellow-sufferer farther up the beach, one heartless ruffian put to Margaret Wilson the question, 'What think you of your friend now?' And what was the calm and noble reply? 'What do I see but Christ in one of His members wrestling there? Think you that we are the sufferers? No, it is Christ in us—He who sendeth us not a warfare upon our own charges.'"[1] And so these blessed martyrs passed away, never again to be *engulphed in either of these* seas; but destined, in the Lord's own time, to "*stand on*" *another* sea, even on "a sea of glass mingled with fire," and there to "sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb:"[2] Who had "loved" them, and "*given Himself for*" *them!*[3]

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[1] For a fuller account of these martyrdoms, see "History vindicated in the case of the Wigtown Martyrs," by the Rev. Archibald Stuart.

[2] Rev. xv. 2, 3. [3] Gal. ii. 20.

But I have still to speak of the sea in its more furious and terrific aspects: from "*the madness*"[1] of which, however, some are destined to escape. Take the following as *illustrations* in point—viewing the subject *emblematically*, without further comment; and taking them also as an *illustration* of the thoughtlessness likewise of some, who when made aware of their peril, seek to hide it from themselves by going down deeper into the pleasures and vanities of the world.

The writer says, "After having remained several hours on deck, in the presence of the tempest, peering through the darkness at those black liquid walls of water, mounting above you in ceaseless agitation, or tumbling over in cataracts of gleaming foam,—the wind roaring through the rigging,—timbers creaking *as if the ship would break its heart*,—the spray and rain beating in your face,—everything around in tumult,—suddenly to descend into the quiet of a snug, well-lighted little cabin, with the fire-light dancing on the white rosebud chintz, the well-furnished book shelves, and all the innumerable nick-nacks that decorate its walls, and everything about you as bright and fresh as a lady's boudoir in May Fair,—the certainty of being a good 300 miles from any troublesome shore,—all combine to inspire a feeling of comfort and security difficult to describe."[2]

And then further on, he says, "*In the next moment* there resounded over the ship that cry which has been the preface to so many a disaster—the ring of which, none who have ever heard it are likely to forget—'*Breakers ahead!*' . . . No land was to be seen, but the line of breakers every instant became more evident; *at the pace we were going, in* 7 *or* 8 *minutes we should be upon them*. . . . To back was impossible, we could only wear,—and to wear in such a sea was no very pleasant operation. But the little ship seemed to know what she was about, as well as any of

[1] See and compare Eccl. i. 17; ii. 12; vii. 25; ix. 3; x. 13; 2 Pet. ii. 16; Psa. lxv. 7.

[2] Letters from High Latitudes, p. 14.

us: up went the helm, round came the schooner into the trough of the sea,—*high over her quarter toppled an enormous sea*, built up of I know not how many tons of water, and hung over the deck;—by some unaccountable wriggle, an instant ere it thundered down she had twisted her stern on one side, and the waves passed underneath: in another minute her head was to the sea, the mainsail was eased over, and all danger was passed."[1]

A well-known writer has described a storm at sea, and the dangers to which even a well-built ship is necessarily exposed in consequence, so graphically; that albeit the description occurs in a work of fiction, I am tempted to insert it. He says:—

"Whither go the clouds and wind so eagerly? If, like guilty spirits, they repair to some dread conference with powers like themselves, in what wild regions do the elements hold counsel, or where unbend in terrible disport?

"Here! free from that cramped prison called the earth, and out upon the waste of waters. Here, *roaring, raging, shrieking, howling all night long.* Hither come the sounding voices from the caverns on the coast of that small island [England], sleeping a thousand miles away, so quietly in the midst of angry waves; and hither, to meet them, rush the blasts from the unknown desert places of the world. Here, in the fury of their unchecked liberty, they storm and buffet with each other, until *the sea, lashed into passion like their own, leaps up in ravings mightier than theirs, and the whole scene is madness.*

"On, on, on, over countless miles of angry space roll the long heaving billows. Mountains and waves are here, and yet are not; for what is now the one, is now the other; then all is but a boiling heap of rushing water. Pursuit, and flight, and mad return of wave on wave, and savage struggle, ending in a spouting-up of foam that whitens the black night; incessant change of place, and form, and hue;

[1] Letters from High Latitudes, pp. 208, 209.

constancy in nothing, but eternal strife; on, on, on, they roll, *and darker grows the night, and louder howls the wind, and more clamorous and fierce become the million voices in the sea*, when the wild cry goes forth upon the storm 'a ship!'

"Onward she comes, in gallant combat with the elements, her tall masts trembling, *and her timbers starting on the strain;* onward she comes, now high upon the curling billows, now low down in the hollows of the sea, as hiding for a moment from its fury; and every storm-voice in the air and water, cries more loudly yet, 'a ship!'

"Still she comes striving on: and at her boldness and the spreading cry, the angry waves rise up above each other's hoary heads to look; and round about the vessel, far as the mariners on the deck can pierce into the gloom, they press upon her, forcing each other down, and starting up, and rushing forward from afar in dreadful curiosity. High over her they break; and round her surge and roar; and giving place to others, moaningly depart, and dash themselves to fragments in their baffled anger. Still she comes onward bravely. And though the eager multitude crowd thick and fast upon her all the night, and dawn of day discovers the untiring train yet bearing down upon the ship in an eternity of troubled water, onward she comes, with dim lights burning in her hull, *and people there asleep;* as if no deadly element were peering in at every seam and chink, and no drowned seaman's grave, with but a plank to cover it, were yawning *in the unfathomable depths below.*"[1]

Comment upon such a description would of course be worse than useless: but if the writer had intended *figuratively* to have described the *emblematical* sea, of which we have been speaking, he could not have employed more appropriate language; especially if his description were to be applied to "the great tribulation"[2] of the latter days (of

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[1] From one of Dickens' works.

[2] Jer. xxx. 5-7; Dan. xii. 1; Mat. xxiv. 21, 23.

which the first French Revolution was but a sample): when God Himself will at length appear *to "still the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult"* or, *"madness,"* as the "Book of Common Prayer" has it, *"of the people."*[1]

And after having given an account of *the wreck of a noble vessel*, and the awful depravity of many of the passengers who had been rescued therefrom; and afterwards furnished two illustrations of "the madness of the people" themselves, I shall then bring this Chapter to a close.

Miss C. F. Gordon Cumming, in her "Via Cornwall to Egypt," speaking of the wreck of the "Royal Adelaide," a splendid clipper of 2,000 tons burthen (Emigrant Ship bound for Sydney), on the west bay just between Weymouth and Portland—on the natural bar of shingle forming one side of the harbour, says:—"The vessel was driven in broadside on the beach, and hurled by the waves to within 20 feet of the crowds who had been watching her for hours, and who would fain have helped her had such help been possible. Now the breakers had it their own way, *and played with her as a cat with a mouse*—sometimes receding, so as to leave her almost dry, then dashing right over her with such violence as to threaten to wash off every soul of that agonized multitude which crowded her decks." At last, "the vessel broke asunder, with a crash like thunder, which resounded loud above the roaring of the waves—a terrible sound, which for days afterwards seemed to re-echo in the ears of all who heard it. Straightway the whole sea was full of floating cargo, passengers' luggage, masts, spars, planks, stores; and every wave that dashed upon the beach hurled up some fragment, *as if in defiance*, till the whole shore was heaped with goods of every sort and kind—as if some merchant's vast stores lay piled in wildest confusion." "As the vessel finally sank, one old woman was left standing on deck alone. She had been too terrified to take her place in the cradle, so had to be left to her fate."

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[1] Psa. lxv. 7.

"And now that nothing more could be done to save the living, a terrible scene commenced, a thousand-fold more horrible than the terrors of the previous hours. The ship carried large quantities of spirits as part of her cargo, the very strongest form of old Hollands and Whisky, from 40 to 50 above proof. Soon the shore was strewn in every direction, with spirit casks and cases. Men chilled with working for hours in the bitter cold and wet of that piercing winter night, were not slow to yield to the temptation thus thrown in their way. Casks were broken—in some cases the tops knocked off—and men and boys drank the fiery spirit as though it had been a draught of water, and when they had drunk till they no longer could discern one barrel from another, many of them turned to the casks of paraffin, and drank from them; then, truly helpless, they lay down, wherever they chanced to be, and soon the whole shore was strewn with corpse-like wretches, who lay out all night in the bitter cold, some so near the waves that the spray dashed over them, and they narrowly escaped being swept away altogether. Many of these were rescued in the morning chilled and cold, but still alive, and were carried home by friends who strove to bring them back to life. Nine were actually dead and their bodies lay waiting the Coroner's Inquest, and other deaths were reported later."[1]

Farther on, she says, "*A strange and lovely calm had succeeded the storm, and the sunny sea gave no hint of the wild mischief it had wrought so recently. It lay still and placid, reflecting the cloudless blue overhead;* the harbour was crowded with ships of many nations, which had here found shelter during the gale, and now hoisted their white sails to dry in the light breeze. *So bright and summer-like was the weather, that the wintry storm of the previous days seemed as though it must have been a dream. All was laughing sunshine,* and only the presence of armed sentinels at every turn served to remind us of where we were, and of

[1] Pp. 16-19.

the moral chill that surrounded us."[1] While still farther on, in speaking of the wreckage, she says, "I noticed one girl's hat from which the waves had washed the trimming, only to replace it with a new one, scarcely less brilliant than the gay flowers which, but a few hours before, had been the pride of some lassie—perhaps one of those whose lives had passed away in the darkness of that terrible night. Now the poor battered straw was *roofed* with green and crimson seaweeds, and from that strangely suggestive garland I gathered a little branch of coraline, encrusted with tiny shells, as a touching memorial of the wreck."[2]

And now from the *literal*, I pass on to the *emblematical* sea. And as an awful example of the "*hungry*" waves of *this* sea, which, like "the horse leech," with its "two daughters," is ever crying, "*Give give;*" and is "*never satisfied*";[3] take the following extract from Commander F. E. Forbes', R.N., "Dahomey and the Dahomans: being the Journals of Two Missions to the King of Dahomey, and Residence at his Capital, in the years 1849 and 1850." He says, "While industry is discouraged, all possible means are adopted to stimulate the warlike propensities of the people, and to familiarize them with scenes of blood. The Hwae-novee-wha, or great annual feast of Dahomey, with all its sanguinary customs, is peculiarly fitted to harden the people, and rouse them to a state of savage war excitement." "There is only one part of this great national festival to which we shall refer, as characteristic of the people, the Ek-que-noo-ah-toh-meh, or human sacrifices."

"A platform called Ahtoh, about 100 feet square and 12 feet in elevation, with a breast-high parapet, is erected in the centre of the Market-place, Ah-jah-ee. The cloths of various colours by which it is covered, the banners which float over it, the gaudy tents and umbrellas, would seem to intimate that it is intended for some gay and festive scene. The Market-place, as seen from the Atoh, is thronged with

[1] Pp. 21, 22. [2] Pp. 22, 23. [3] Prov. xxx. 15, 16.

a naked mob, consisting of the soldiers of the King, his brothers and sons, ministers, and high caboceers, eagerly expecting his arrival. His Majesty soon appears. He is about to dispense his royal bounty to his officers and soldiers, in no dignified or becoming manner. They are to scramble for his gifts, and they are prepared to strive fearfully with each other. . . . . The promiscuous distribution of cowries, cloths, tobacco, showered down by his Majesty's own hand on the eager and striving mob . . . . presents a great show of unbounded liberality. The Hwae-novee is the harvest season to the monarch: he not only gives, but receives. All who attend are expected to send a present, each according to his wealth. . . . . The relative value of his Majesty's return might be about a halfpenny in the pound! The difference constitutes the royal perquisite. It would be well if this were the only purpose for which the Ahtoh was designed; but the largess bestowed on them would be little valued by the Dahoman soldiery unless enhanced by blood shedding."

On the occasion at which Mr. Forbes was present fourteen unfortunate persons, who had been seized while engaged in the cultivation of their farms, were brought forward. They were "lashed hand and foot, and tied in small canoes and baskets, dressed in clean white dresses with a high red cap, and, on the heads of the King's attendants, were borne to the platform. These sturdy men met the gaze of their persecutors with a firmness perfectly astonishing. Not a sigh was breathed. In all my life I never saw such coolness so near death. It did not seem real, yet it soon proved frightfully so. One monster placed his finger to the eyes of a victim who hung down his head; but, finding no moisture, drew upon himself the ridicule of his fiendish coadjutors. Ten of the human offerings to the bloodthirsty mob, and an alligator and a cat were guarded by soldiers, the other four by Amazons." . . . .

"In the meantime the King returned, and, calling us from our seats at the farther end of the platform, asked us

if we would wish to witness the sacrifice. With horror we declined, and begged to be allowed to save a portion of them. After some conversation with his courtiers, seeing him waver, I offered him 100 dollars each for the first and last of the ten; while at the same time, Mr. Beecroft made a similar offer for the first of the four, which was accepted, and the three were immediately unlashed from their precarious position, but forced to remain spectators of the horrid deed done on their less fortunate countrymen. What must have been their thoughts?

"The King insisted on our seeing the place of sacrifice. Immediately under the royal stand, within the brake of Acacia bushes, stood seven or eight fell ruffians, some armed with clubs, others with scimitars, grinning horribly. As we approached, the mob yelled fearfully, and called upon the King *to 'feed them, they were hungry.'* . . . Disgusted beyond the powers of description, we retired to our seats. As we reached them, *a fearful yell rent the air.* The victims were held high above the heads of their barriers, *and the naked ruffians thus acknowledged the munificence of their King.* Silence again ruled, and the King made a speech, stating that of his presents he gave a portion to his soldiers, as his father and grandfather had done before. These were Attah paluns. Having called their names, the one nearest was divested of his clothes, the foot of the basket placed on the parapet, when the King gave the upper part an impetus, and the victim fell at once into the pit beneath. The fall of upwards of 12 feet might have stunned him, and before sense could return, the head was cut off, and the body thrown to the mob, who, now armed with clubs and branches, brutally mutilated and dragged it to a distant pit, where it was left as food for the beasts and birds of prey. After the third victim had been thus sacrificed, the King retired, and the chiefs and slave-dealers completed the deed which the monarch blushed to finish."[1]

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[1] This account is taken from the 2nd Vol.

On a review of such a frightful scene as this, can we forbear crying out with the Psalmist, "Have respect unto the Covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty"?[1] But I have yet one more illustration to give, of the *stern, unyielding, relentless, unpitying,* and *remorseless cruelty* of *this* sea (and then I shall have done); and this (from its fiendish atrocity) is even more fearful than the one just given: because *that* was taken from the *heathen* world, while *this* is taken from the *semi-civilized* world. It is an account of a duel of a "novel" character, as the writer himself observes, "even for Courts of honour," as they are *called,* in America; which is recorded by Mr. G. W. Featherstonhaugh, in his "Excursion through the Slave States from Washington on the Potomac to the Frontier of Mexico" (published by Mr. Murray in 1844); and which took place in Little Rock, the capital of Arkansas.

The terms were proposed by the aggressor himself, who fell a victim to his own infamous and diabolical proposal. "There was a room" says the writer "in the house" where the fracas occurred, "totally dark, into which not a cranny of light came, and this room was fixed upon for the scene of the mortal combat. The parties were now each stripped to the skin, except their trousers, their arms and shoulders well greased with lard, and a brace of loaded pistols and a bowie knife given to each. Thus were they put into the dark room with the understanding that the butchery was not to begin before a signal was made by the seconds outside. For near a quarter of an hour after the signal had been given, the seconds heard no noise whatever, and were disposed to think the affair would end as it began, in words, when suddenly a pistol went off and then another. The survivor of this strange duel afterwards stated, that scarce a tread or breath could be heard in the room after they had cocked their pistols; then he saw, or thought he saw, for an instant, the cat eyes of his antagonist glistening,

[1] Psa. lxxiv. 20.

but they changed their place so quickly that he was uncertain, and did not venture to fire. At length, however, he fired, and received a shot instantly in return, the ball of which lodged in his shoulder. Being in great pain, and fearing he should faint, he fired a second pistol, when instantly he received a second ball in the fleshy part of his thigh. He soon became very faint from loss of blood, and after trying in vain to support himself against the wall, fell on the floor. Silently and slowly the other now approached his intended victim with the knife in his hand ready to dispatch him. The prostrate man, perceiving the wary character of his adversary, and aware of his extreme danger, had summoned all his presence of mind, grasping his knife firmly, and raising himself cautiously up a little, he listened, but could hear nothing approach. Moving his upraised arm around, he endeavoured to pierce with his eyes into the darkness that enveloped him, when suddenly he saw the same grey eyes glistening in upon him, and striking with all his might, he plunged his knife through his incautious assailant's heart, who fell to the ground. The successful duellist now called out to the Seconds to open the door, and entering they found the Doctor weltering in his blood, but still holding his knife up to the hilt in the dead man's body."[1]

But I fear my readers will be thinking that this is but a Chapter of horrors: yet in days of such shallow religiousness as these, when the fall of man is so flatly denied, such relations are needed, to shew what man by nature really is, and what society will again become, when God withdraws His restraining grace, and lets Satan loose upon it in the days of the quickly-coming Antichrist. And could we multiply such instances a million-fold, we could never fathom the depth of that fall, which produced this awful sea of iniquity in the sinner's heart,[2] or gauge the longsuffering of

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[1] Vol. ii. pp. 56-58.

[2] When that man of God, Robert Haldane, went from Scotland to Geneva, now between 70 and 80 years ago, and instructed the students in the University there in religious truth; on one occasion, when reading the

God in bearing with it so long—a subject which I shall hope to touch upon in my next Chapter. Nor can we wonder, that it is prophesied of our Lord Jesus Christ, that when He comes again, He will come "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."[1] And how majestically does the prophet describe this, and in the symbolical language also of our subject:—for this passage no doubt will only have its *exhaustive* fulfilment at the second coming of the Lord:—when he says, "Before Him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at His feet. He stood and measured the earth: He beheld, and *drove asunder the nations:* and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow. His ways are everlasting." "Was Jehovah *displeased against the rivers?* was *Thine anger against the rivers?* Was *Thy wrath against the sea*, that Thou didst ride upon Thine horses and Thy chariots of salvation?" "Thou didst march through the land in indignation, Thou didst *thresh the heathen in anger*. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of Thy people, even for salvation with Thine anointed." "*Thou didst walk through the sea with Thine horses, through the heap of great waters.*"[2]

5th chapter of Romans with the late celebrated author of the "History of the Reformation," Dr. D'Aubigné, then a young man, with especial reference to the doctrine of original sin, which was the doctrine which seemed most impossible to him at that time; the Dr. being intellectually convinced of the fact, replied, "Yes! I see clearly that original sin *is proclaimed in the Scriptures.*" "But," said Haldane, raising his hand, and pointing to the Dr.'s breast, "*Do you see it* IN YOUR OWN HEART?" That was, under God, the thunderbolt that sent him to the foot of the cross of Christ. And it is the Spirit alone, who can thus convince the soul of its sin, and send it as a believing suppliant to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself for salvation. (John xvi. 7-11.)

[1] 2 Thes. i. 8, 9. [2] Hab. iii. 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 15.

CHAPTER VI.

LIGHT UPON THE WATERS.

"Hail, holy light, offspring of Heaven, first-born,
Or of the Eternal, co-eternal beam
May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate,
Or hear'st thou rather, pure etherial stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the Sun,
Before the heavens thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, did'st invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite."

"Light, that from the dark abyss
Madèst all things, none amiss,
To share Thy Beauty, share Thy bliss,—
Come to us: come!

"Light, that dost o'er all things reign,
Light, that dost all life maintain;
O Light, that dost create again,—
Come to us: come!

"Light of men, that left the skies,
Light, that look'd through human eyes
And died in darkness, as man dies,—
Come to us; come!

"Light that, stoop'd to rise and raise,
Soar'd to God above our gaze,
And still art with us all the days,—
Come to us: come!

"Light, that makest manifest,
Beautifiest, hallowest,
Light, in thy joyous strength at rest,—
Come to us: come!"

"Jesus, Sun of Righteousness
Brightest beam of love Divine,
With the early morning rays
Do Thou on our darkness shine,
And dispel with purest light
All our night!"

"Lord, Thou art mine,
Send help to me!
Christ, I am Thine,
Deliver me!
Then shall I praise and sing,
'My soul, bless thou thy God and King!'

. . . . .

"All light is Thine,
Oh, shine on me!
Darkness is mine,
Enlighten me!
Then shall I praise and sing,
'My soul, bless thou thy God and King!'"

"God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."—1 JOHN i. 5-7.

"Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."—JAMES i. 17.

"Jesus cried and said," "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness."—JOHN xii. 44, 46.

"They looked unto Him, and were lightened; and their faces were not ashamed."—PSA. xxxiv. 5.

"O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me."—PSA. xliii. 3.

"And He shall be as the light of the morning, when the Sun riseth, even a morning without clouds."—2 SAM. xxiii. 4.

THE Apostle, who tells us that "God is *light*,"[1] tells us also that "God is *love;* and" that "he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."[2] Nay, we cannot even look upon God without becoming *like Him;*[3] and as

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[1] 1 John i. 5. [2] 1 John iv. 16. [3] 2 Cor. iii. 18.

His very *look* itself scatters loveliness: so also does His *light;* aye, even when it shines upon the waters!

From the very dawn of Poetry the splendour of the morning and evening skies have excited the admiration of mankind: but nowhere are they to be seen in such gorgeous beauty, as when the morning or evening light is shining upon the southern seas. Ruskin, in one of his works, thus felicitously describes their beauty. "The whole heaven," he says, "from the zenith to the horizon, becomes one molten, mantling sea of colour and fire; every black bar turns into massy gold, every ripple and wave into unsullied shadowless crimson, and purple, and scarlet, and colours for which there are no words in language, and no ideas in the mind—things which can only be conceived while they are visible; the intense hollow blue of the upper sky melting through it all showing here deep, and pure, and lightness; there modulated by the filmy, formless body of the transparent vapour, till it is lost imperceptibly in its crimson and gold."

And hence, by reason of the changing light upon the waters, the sea is always assuming some new and varied aspect—now smiling in the sunlight, and then again frowning under the thick dark clouds that overhang it, and envelop it as with a mantle. How apt an emblem of that sea of which we have been speaking! Sea water, though perfectly colourless in itself, seems to be of a blue tint, when seen in the mass, except when covering a white sandy bottom, when it appears of a deep vivid green. Scorseby compares the general hue of the polar seas to an ultramarine blue; and M. Costaz likens that of the Mediterranean to a perfectly transparent solution of the most beautiful indigo, or to celestial blue; while Captain Tuckey characterizes the waves of the Atlantic in equinoctial regions as of a bright azure. "But," as one writer observes, "the ocean remarkably varies its hue at the same place. It is observed by Humboldt, that towards evening, when the edges of the waves, as the sun shines upon them, are of an emerald green, the surface

of the shaded side reflects a purple hue. Nothing, he states, is more striking than the rapid changes which the ocean undergoes beneath a serene sky, where no variations whatever are to be perceived in the atmosphere. In the midst of the tropical deep the water passes from an indigo blue to the deepest green, and from this to a slate grey, without any apparent influence from the azure of the sky or the colour of the clouds. In general the sea between the tropics is of a more intense and purer azure than in high latitudes—the ocean often remaining blue when, in fine weather, the greater part of the sky is covered with light and floating fleecy clouds."

Again, the same writer says, "the waters of the ocean vary in their clearness, from a crystalline transparency to a dullness bordering on opacity. Those of the northern seas, on the West Coast of the Scandinavian peninsula, have been remarked by all observers for being of an extraordinary transparency, which has, perhaps, no parallel in any other region. Here are those inlets of the sea, wild and romantic in their aspect, called the *Fiords* of Norway, a name analogous to the Scottish *Firth*, both having the same Norse derivation. 'Nothing can be more surprising,' says Sir A. de Capell Brooke, 'and beautiful than the singular clearness of the Northern seas. As we passed slowly over the surface, *the bottom*, which here was in general a white sand, *was clearly visible, with its minutest objects*, where the depth was from twenty to twenty-five fathoms. During the whole course of the tour I made, nothing appeared to me so extraordinary as *the inmost recesses of the deep thus unveiled to the eye*. The surface of the ocean was unruffled by the slightest breeze, and the gentle splashing of the oars scarcely disturbed it. Hanging over the gunwale of the boat, with wonder and delight I gazed on the slowly-moving scene below. Where the bottom was sandy the different kinds of asteria, echini, and even the smallest shells, *appeared at that great depth conspicuous to the eye; and the water seemed, in some measure, to have the effect of a magnifier, by enlarging the*

objects like a telescope, and bringing them seemingly nearer. Now, creeping along, we saw, far beneath, the rugged sides of a mountain rising towards our boat, the base of which, perhaps, was hidden some miles in the great deep below. Though moving on a level surface, it seemed almost as if we were ascending the height under us; and when we passed over its summit, which rose in appearance to within a few feet of our boat, and came again to the descent, which on this side was suddenly perpendicular, and overlooking a watery gulf, as we pushed gently over the last point of it, it seemed almost as if we had thrown ourselves down this precipice, the illusion, from the crystal clearness of the deep, actually producing a sudden start. Now we came again to a plain, and passed slowly over submarine forests and meadows, which appeared in the expanse below; inhabited, doubtless, by thousands of animals, to which they afford both food and shelter—animals unknown to man; *and I could sometimes observe large fishes of singular shape gliding softly through the watery thickets,* unconscious of what was moving above them. As we proceeded, the bottom became no longer visible; its fairy scenes gradually faded to the view, and were lost in the dark green depths of the Ocean.' "

But my readers may perhaps be asking, "What has all this to do with the sinner? and what analogy is there between the light going down into the depths of the sea, and the light of God shining in upon the dark heart of a convinced and quickened sinner?" "Much every way:" for as the light reveals what is going on in the hidden depths of the sea: so does the light reveal the dark hidden recesses of the natural heart, which until then had been completely concealed from the sight of the sinner himself. And although the sea itself cannot shrink from the sight of the "*dead* things" that "are formed *from under the waters;*"[1] or be horrified at the innnumerable slimy, creeping, crawling things that lurk in its bosom; or start at the sight of the

[1] Job xxvi. 5.

many "monsters," that sport in its depths: yet when the light goes down into the depths of a poor convinced *sinner's* heart, it is different. For then the "dead things," that have been "formed from under" *its* "waters"—the "dead works,"[1] the "wicked works,"[2] the "works of darkness,"[3] that have hitherto been hidden from his view, are now revealed to him, aye, and sometimes with awful distinctness; and his very heart quails at the sight of them. You may see a list of some of them in Mat. xv. 19; Mark vii. 21-23; Gal. v. 19-21; Col. iii. 5-9; and James iii. 14-16. For "when souls begin to seek after the Lord Jesus," Bunyan truly says, "then Satan begins to afflict and distress;" and "*there doth now arise, even in the heart,* such defiling and foul infectious thoughts that putteth the tempted to their wits' end; for now it seems to the soul that *the very flood-gates of the flesh are opened,* and that to sin there is no stop at all; now the air seems to be covered with darkness, and the man is as if he was changed into the nature of a devil; now if ignorance and unbelief prevail, he concludeth that he is a reprobate, made to be taken and destroyed."[4]

In the natural world, the glancing light of the sunbeam is sometimes a very lovely sight upon the waters; but can such light as *this* upon *these* waters be a *lovely* sight to any? Indeed, indeed it *can;* and *is* to those who have eyes to see it, and adore: for we read, that "the angels" "desire to look into" these things;[5] and our Blessed Lord has told us, that "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" "more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."[6] But the poor convinced sinner himself cannot see it yet; and he says in his heart, "How doth God know? can He judge through the dark cloud? Thick clouds are a covering to

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[1] Heb. vi. 14; ix. 14. [2] Col. i. 21. [3] Eph. v. 11.
[4] From Bunyan's "Light to Them that Sit in Darkness."
[5] 1 Pet. i. 12. [6] Luke xv. 10, 7.

Him, that He seeth not; and He walketh in the circuit of heaven;"[1] for "now men see not the bright light that is in the cloud:"[2] for it is as yet *on the other side of it.* Ah! but when it bursts through it, a man can see it *then!* The writer could tell of one, who in the days of his fierce temptations from the Adversary, when thick black clouds hung upon his spirit, and he imagined it was all over with him; and the thought of his heart was, "Ah! I shall never, never see *His* face, I shall never, never *look upon Him*": when there suddenly darted into his mind the thought, "Yes: *I shall, I shall:* I shall have *one look at Him,* when He calls me up for judgment"! And then in a moment a rent was made in his thick dark cloud, and a bright beam from "the Sun of Righteousness" shot down upon his troubled waters; while he burst out in rapture at the sight, and "said in his heart," "Then I *love* Him! then I *love* Him! And He *must love me!* for 'we love Him, *because* He *first* loved us'"![3] Don't you think that *that* must have been a lovely sight to "the angels that are in heaven;" when they saw the work of God in that poor troubled soul, which had been before so completely hidden from himself? For thus does "our God" deal with "the poor and needy"[4] ones; "*to the intent* that *now* unto the principalities and powers in the heavenlies *might be known by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God.*"[5]

And how striking an emblem of the conversion of a "natural man"[6] to God, is the light thus let down into the depths of the sea! Nay, it is more than an emblem: for in both cases it is in truth a living reality! For as the Rev. John Newton, of Olney, has well observed, in describing "a person who is under the drawings of God, which will infallibly lead him to Jesus Christ, for life and salvation," "The beginning of this work is instantaneous. It is effected *by a certain kind of light* communicated to the soul, to

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[1] Job xxii. 13, 14. [2] Job xxxvii. 31. [3] 1 John iv. 19.
[4] Isa. xxv. 4; xli. 17. [5] Eph. iii. 8-10. [6] 1 Cor. ii. 14.

which it was before a stranger. The eyes of the understanding are opened and enlightened. The light at first afforded is weak and indistinct, like the morning dawn; but when it is once begun, it will certainly increase and spread to the perfect day."[1] All God's people can testify to some such experience as this, although all cannot point out the exact time when such a change was effected in them: neither indeed is it essential that they should be able to do so. For the question is not so much, *when* a man was converted, or *how* he was converted; but whether he *be* converted at all. "Examine yourselves," says the Apostle, "*whether ye be* in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that *Jesus Christ is in you*, except ye be reprobates"?[2] for "if any man have *not* the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."[3] Nevertheless, in the generality of cases, as it was in that of the Writer himself, so decided and marked a change undoubtedly thus takes place.

Let me mention a few cases in point, by way of illustration of the subject.

Of the celebrated Earl of Rochester, after "the hand of God had visibly touched him," and "the sense of his bodily tortures was not so keen and excruciating as the agonies of his mind," it is recorded, that "the storm and perturbation of his mind gradually subsided; the labouring spirit broke from under its cloud of apprehension; and the animating hope of the Gospel, like *the clear shining* after rain, diffused over every dark spot of his anticipations, *the brightness* of a pure and calm serenity. He became fully persuaded both of the truth of Christianity and of the power of inward peace, and cast himself entirely on the merits of the Redeemer, for obtaining mercy and forgiveness. One immediate cause to which he ascribed his conviction, was the 53rd Chapter of Isaiah. . . . . By comparing that with the history of Christ's advent and crucifixion, the coincidence appeared so

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[1] Newton's Works (Tegg's edition), "On Grace in the Blade," p. 57.
[2] 2 Cor. xiii. 5. [3] Rom. viii. 9.

strange, the facts accorded so exactly with the prophecy, though written many ages before, that he felt the truth forced upon him with a power of demonstration that he could not resist. . . . . He had caused the Chapter to be read to him so often, ... that he had got it completely by heart. . . . . *The words*, he remarked, carried an authority with them, which *shot like rays of light into his mind*, so that his understanding was not only satisfied and convinced, but *by an inward power, so effectually constrained*, that he ever after as firmly believed in the Saviour, as if he had seen Him in the clouds."[1]

The same writer, in his life of Dr. Thomas Bateman, speaks to the like effect of him. He says, "It was in April, 1820, that he first spoke to an intimate acquaintance on the subject of religion. He was labouring under extreme languor, and had expressed his conviction that he could not live much longer; but added he, 'all these sufferings are a just punishment for my scepticism, and neglect of God and religion.' This led to a conversation, in course of which he blamed the tendency of his professional studies for misleading him; although he concurred in the opinion of his friend, that the evil lay rather in his never having examined the evidences for the truth of the Bible, as an actual revelation from God; and observed that he had intended to enquire fully into the matter, when the complaint in his eyes came on, and shut him out from reading. Meantime, 'Scott's Essays on some of the most important subjects in Religion,' were read to him; and this appeared to produce a very surprising effect on his mind. He listened with intense earnestness, and when the first Essay was concluded, he exclaimed, 'This is demonstration! complete demonstration!' He then wished to hear the account given by the Evangelists, of the resurrection of Christ, which was read to him; besides many other passages of sacred writ; with some of which he was particularly struck.

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[1] Crichton's Lives of Eminent Converts from Infidelity, vol. i., pp. 64-66.

"For several days he showed increasing interest on the subject of religion; and had portions of Scripture, and other books continually read to him; which totally altered his views and sentiments. '*It is impossible to describe,*' said he, '*the change which has taken place in my mind: I feel as if* A NEW WORLD *was opened to me.* All the interests and pursuits of this, have faded into nothing, in comparison with it. They seem so mean, and paltry, and insignificant, that *my blindness in living so long immersed in them, is quite inconceivable and astonishing to myself.*' He often expressed, in the strongest terms, and with many tears, his deep repentance, and his abhorrence of himself for his former sinful life, and rebellion against God; but he seemed, from the first, to have so clear a view of the all-sufficiency of the atonement, and of the Christian scheme of salvation, as freed him at once from that distrust which is so apt to afflict penitents, on a first conviction of their sins. . . . Having recovered his strength in the course of the summer, he still maintained an equal regard for the subject that most deeply concerned him. . . . The blessing of his conversion, he used to remark, was never out of his mind, day or night; that it was a theme of perpetual thanksgiving; and that he never awoke in the night, without being overwhelmed with joy and gratitude at the recollection of it."[1]

But we have seen, that the first thing which the light reveals, is *the deep*, over which *the darkness* had brooded. "He revealeth *the deep* and *secret things:* He knoweth *what is in the darkness*, and *the light dwelleth with Him.*"[2] And I shall now, therefore, have to give a few instances of this also. The light may perchance come down upon the spirit softly and gently; and gradually as the morning dawn; or it may flash suddenly into its darkness, like the lightning; or as Saul was blinded on his way to Damascus, by "a light from heaven" "above the brightness of the sun:"[3] for

[1] Crichton's Lives of Eminent Converts from Infidelity, vol. ii., pp. 208-211.

[2] Dan. ii. 2. [3] Acts ix. 3; xxvi. 13.

God's dealings with souls are various. But, however it may come, whether gradually, or instantaneously, it will invariably reveal the deep which the darkness had concealed and covered: for this is its object. And although the soul may then be compelled to cry out, "Let not *the waterflood* overflow me, neither let *the deep* swallow me up, and let not *the pit* shut her mouth upon me;"[1] the answer of Jehovah to it will ever be the same, "Yet Jehovah will command His lovingkindness *in the day time,*" (*i.e.*, when its light is at the full), "and" even "*in the night,*" (which may succeed it,) "His song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life."[2] For "the Lord" hath said, "*I will* bring My people" "from *the depths of the sea.*"[3]

Let me first take the case of the celebrated La Harpe, one of the French infidel philosophers, who was cast into prison by order of the National Convention, in the days of Robespierre. The Palace of the Luxembourg was then used for that purpose; and here he became acquainted with the Bishop of Brieux, who was his fellow-prisoner, and who took an interest in his sorrows. "He recommended him," says his Biographer, "as a means of beguiling the solitude and languor of his mind, to read the Psalms of David, in which he would find poetical beauties that might entertain his fancy." Being a Roman Catholic, he also lent him "The Imitation of Christ," by Thomas a Kempis. The account he gives of his own conversion is as follows:—

"I was in my prison, in a little chamber, solitary and disconsolate. For some days I had read the Psalms, the Gospel, and a few pious books. Their effect was rapid, though gradual. Already I had yielded to the faith, and made new discoveries of the truth; but *the light I saw only terrified and alarmed me,* BY REVEALING THE ABYSS into which the errors of forty years had plunged me. *I saw the extent of the evil, but found no remedy.* There was nothing around me which I could substitute for the succours of

[1] Psa. lxix. 15. [2] Psa. xlii. 8. [3] Psa. lxviii. 22.

religion. On one hand, *my life* was before me; but such as *the beams of heavenly light only made more frightful:* on the other hand, death—death, which I expected every hour, and in its most appalling form. The priest no longer appeared on the scaffold, to console the dying sufferer; if he mounted that bloody stage, it was only to fall himself a victim. Full of these disconsolate thoughts, my heart was cast down; and addressing myself in silence *to the God I had just found, but Whom I scarcely yet knew, 'What must I do?'* I said, '*What wouldst Thou have me to be?*' On my table there lay the 'Imitation of Christ;' and I had been told, in that excellent book, I might find an answer to my thoughts. I opened it on chance, and my eye caught these words of the Saviour, '*Here am I, my son: I come to thee, because thou hast called upon me?*' I read no more. The sudden impression I felt is beyond description; and it is as impossible for me to express it, as to forget it. I fell with my face to the earth, bathed in tears, and almost choked with sighs, uttering loud and broken exclamations. I felt my heart comforted and enlarged, but at the same time almost ready to burst. Overwhelmed with a multitude of thoughts and reflections, I wept for a long time; but without having any remembrance of my situation, except that my heart never felt an emotion more violent, or so inexpressibly delightful; and that the words, 'Here am I, my son,' never ceased to echo in my mind, or to agitate all its faculties."[1]

[1] Crichton's "Eminent Converts from Infidelity," vol. ii., pp. 313-314. There can, I think, be no doubt whatever of La Harpe's real conversion to God: for God is a Sovereign; and He works when, and as, He pleases. In Southey's *Life of Cowper*, there is an interesting account of the conversion of a Dutchman, of the name of Van Lier, through the reading of a Socinian book, by means of which the Holy Spirit of God actually made use of the arguments therein employed to attempt to prove that Jesus was not Divine, to convince this poor sinner, that He was "God over all," supreme, "and for ever blessed;" and to lead him as a lost sinner to the foot of the Cross. Moreover, many of the Jansenist Bishops and priests, although still outwardly Roman Catholics, were godly men; and most of them held the doctrines of grace, as against the Jesuits; by whom they were greatly persecuted.

Widely differing from La Harpe in character, yet still speaking the same language of the heart, the Rev. Dr. Love, in the early days of his Christian experience thus writes:—"I am now about to plead all the conversions that are recorded—carrying them up to the Lord, and reminding Him of His own promises and mercies. *The work is begun, when I am turned at His reproof. Before, all was silence and darkness. Now, when the mass of corruption and darkness is made to cry out for the Creator's working, there are some signs of His having come.* I have taken up to the Lord that promise, 'Turn you at My reproof; behold, I will pour out My Spirit unto you';[1] and I must wait on Him with faith and patience.[2] Thus Abraham did for a long time—trusting in God's faithfulness, and glorifying Him by hoping against hope. He is able to give eyes to see sin with that abhorrence, wherewith He and saints and angels see it; and to see His Beloved with that love and delight, wherewith He and they see Him. I felt a sort of coveting of the state of the regenerate. I got some encouragement from that text—'Lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed'[3]—taken in connection with the consideration, that the Lord has given me to understand what regeneration is, and my want of it. In this way Jesus began with Nicodemus,—first teaching him his need of regeneration; and he afterwards experienced it. And so I trust I shall."[4]

To the like effect, speaks the late Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne: for writing "to a soul seeking Jesus," and heading his letter, "Seek to know your corruption," he says:—"Hear what a dear believer writes of himself—'My wickedness, as I am in myself, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, and swallowing up all thought and imagination, *like an infinite deluge*, or mountains over my head. I know not how to express better what my sins

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[1] Prov. i. 23. [2] Heb. x. 36. [3] Isa. vi. 10.
[4] "Memorials of the Rev. John Love, D.D.," vol. i., p. 163.

appear to me to be, than by heaping infinite upon infinite, and multiplying infinite by infinite. *When I look into my heart* and take a view of my wickedness, *it looks like an abyss infinitely deep*, and yet it seems to me that my conviction of sin is exceedingly small and faint.' "[1]

The celebrated Dr. Payson, of America, whose triumphant death-bed is recorded in my First Volume of "The Hidden Mystery," also thus speaks of himself:—"Seemed to be *plunged in a bottomless ocean of sin and corruption*, from which no efforts of my own could free me." Then he says:—"Was enabled to drag my sins to Christ, beseeching Him to slay them for me"; while a few days later, he adds, "Felt my dependance on God for strength. Was surprisingly favoured all day. Was in a sweet, humble frame. I admired and loved the work which Christ had wrought in my heart by His Spirit, just as I should have admired it in any other. My faith seemed to be unusually strong, able to grapple with anything. I felt all day that I depended entirely on Christ for the continuance of my strength."[2] And yet, between three and four years afterwards, in writing to his mother, he says:—"I thought, long since, that I had endured everything horrible and dreadful, that was ever felt, heard of, or conceived; but I find that *the depths* of Satan, and *of a heart desperately wicked, are not so easily fathomed. These unfathomable depths*, however, only serve to show me more clearly the infinite heights and depths of Christ's love."[3]

Such confessions from the Letters and Diaries of the Lord's people, might be multiplied almost indefinitely—all proving the truth of the Scriptural doctrine of "natural" human depravity therein recorded; and I will, therefore, only give one more instance, for the purpose of comparing the confessions of this quickened soul, with the symbolical

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[1] "Memoir and Remains of the Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne," p. 257.
[2] "Memoir of the Rev. Edward Payson, D.D.," p. 69.
[3] Ib., p. 183.

teachings of the Word itself on this subject. It is a portion of an account of the experience of that celebrated missionary to the North American Indians, the Rev. David Brainerd, which I shall place side by side with Scripture, and the entire account of which I shall have to give in a subsequent Chapter.

"The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me." "I heard thy speech and was afraid." "Was Thine anger against the rivers? Was Thy wrath against the sea?" "It pleased God," said Brainerd, "to give me such a sense of my danger, and of the wrath of God, that I stood amazed . . . . exposed to eternal misery, as I evidently saw I was."

"The waters saw Thee, O God . . . . they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. . . . The voice of Thy thunder was in the heaven, the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled, and shook." "From the view that I had," he said, "of my sin and vileness, I was much distressed." "The sight was so dreadful, and showed me so plainly my exposedness to damnation, that I could not endure it."

"The mountains saw Thee, and they trembled: the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high." "The corruption of my heart," he adds, "would break over all bounds, and burst forth on all sides, like floods of waters when they break down their dam." "And being like the troubled sea, I used to contrive to escape the wrath of God by strange projections full of Atheism"—"the great distresses I met with putting me into a most horrible frame of contesting with the Almighty; with an inward vehemence and virulence, finding fault with His way of dealing with mankind." "My soul was in a tumult, and my heart rose against God, as dealing hardly with me."

"He bowed the heavens also and came down: and darkness was under His feet. He made darkness also his secret place: His pavilions round about Him were dark waters

and thick clouds of the skies." "I thought," he says, "God designed my damnation." "The sight of the truth, I say my soul shrank away from, and trembled to think of beholding," "I mistook the thing," "I thought the Spirit of God had quite left me, disconsolate as if nothing in heaven or earth could make me happy."

"Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because He was wroth." "I used to imagine," he continues, "that my heart was not so bad, as the Scriptures and some other books represented." And when "I seemed to mourn for sin, I could in some measure venture on the mercy of God in Christ, *as I thought*, though the preponderating thought and foundation of my hope was some imagination of goodness in my heart." But afterwards *this* foundation also was "moved out of its place": for he adds, "I was brought quite to a stand as finding myself totally lost"; "I saw that it was for ever impossible for me to do anything towards helping or delivering myself." "Then *the channels of waters were seen*, and *the foundations of the world were discovered* at Thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of Thy nostrils."[1]

Then, it is said, "He sent from above, He took me, He drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me." And thus was it also with Brainerd himself: for "when I was walking again in the same place," says he, "where I was brought to see myself lost and helpless, here, in a mournful melancholy state, attempting to pray; *then* as I was walking, unspeakable glory seemed to open up to the view of my soul;" and

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[1] We have this figure used elsewhere. Thus in the 30th Psalm it is said, "Jehovah, by Thy favour Thou hast made *my mountain* to *stand strong*" (v. 7), *i.e.*, I felt myself in a position of *complete confidence and security in Thee*. "Thou didst hide Thy face, and I was troubled," *i.e.*, my sense of confidence and security vanished; or, in other words, "*my mountain was removed out of its place, and its foundation was discovered*," *i.e.*, that I was not resting so implicitly upon Thee, *as I thought I had been*.

in the words of the Psalmist, he might likewise have added, and "at the brightness that was before him," His "thick clouds *passed*, hail stones and coals of fire"—the thunders of Mount Sinai being now no longer needed, when he had found rest in Christ Himself.

"He delivered me, because He delighted in me." "Therefore will I give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, and sing praises unto Thy name." For now he says, "My soul rejoiced with joy unspeakable to see such a God, and I was inwardly pleased and satisfied, that He should be God over all for ever and ever." "I could not but sweetly rejoice in God, lying down and rising up."

But it would not do for the eye of the soul to be *ever* contemplating this dark internal depth. For "the soul" to "be *without*" this "knowledge," is indeed "*not good*,"[1] but when its existence has been made known to it, its look must then chiefly be directed upwards, to "the Sun of Righteousness," Who has now been revealed to it. So "for *one* look at self," says Mc Cheyne, "take *ten* looks at Christ." "The Sun," says Dr. Love, "is a fit emblem of Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, in that wonderful character which belongs to Him of communicating righteousness to such multitudes of condemned creatures—pouring it out, as it were, from Himself, as the great central 'Sun of Righteousness;' and, at the same time, communicating the healing of their diseases, or sanctification—as He arises with healing in His wings.'"[2] And we should "gaze not on the sun as reflected in the ever-varying waters, but on the sun in his steady march in the heavens—not on God as seen in the fitful surface of our own feelings, but on God as seen in the unchanging expanse of His Word"[3]—"looking off unto Jesus, the Author and finisher of our faith."[4] But as I have written so fully upon the Sun in my First Vol. of "The Hidden Mystery," I shall add nothing

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[1] Prov. xix. 2. [2] "Memorials of Rev. John Love, D.D.," vol. i., p. 79.
[3] "Memoir of Adelaide Leaper Newton," pp. 253, 254. [4] Heb. xii. 2.

further on this subject here; but will conclude this Chapter with an account of the conversion of the celebrated Martin Boos, an Evangelical Preacher in the Romish Church, at the end of the last and the beginning of the present Century, whom the Lord permitted to remain there for the awakening of many precious souls, who would never have otherwise been brought to the knowledge of the truth.

"Dismissed from his office and expelled," says his Biographer, "by the Romish Priesthood, on account of his Evangelical labours, being only partially enlightened," "Boos now stood for the first time on the highway, without knowing whither to go. Deeply troubled in his soul, he walked forward. And being no longer able to bear the grief and sorrow of his heart, and perceiving not far from the road a thatched cottage, he left his path, went into the empty hut, threw himself upon the ground and prayed, in order that he might cast the intolerable burden upon Him Who invites us to 'cast all our care upon Him, for He careth for us.' Yes, it was to the 'God of all consolation,' Who does not forsake the forsaken, nor reject the rejected, but Who promises help and consolation to the needy, which is superior and infinitely more than that which men can take away from us—to Him the disconsolate wanderer applied with greater fervour than ever. Nor did he apply in vain. For all at once *a light shone around him that was new and strange to him*, and which he could not explain. He prayed again, and *it became broad daylight in his soul;* he saw in spirit, as he had never done before, Christ as his Mediator and Saviour, and was able to believe on Him more vitally than ever. Comfort, peace, and joy returned into his troubled heart; sorrow had disappeared, and he walked forwards cheerfully and joyfully upon his way."[1] For "by His knowledge," yea, even, *by the knowledge of Him "the depths are broken up*, and the clouds drop down the dew."[2] And when *the Lord* says, "*I* will be as the dew unto Israel,"

[1] Gossner's "Life of Boos," pp. 39, 40. [2] Prov. iii. 20.

then we know, that "he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon."[1]

But my readers ought to know, that "the Gospel of grace and salvation is above all doctrines the most dangerous, *if in word only* it be received by graceless men; *if it be not attended with a revelation of men's need of a Saviour; if it be not accompanied in the soul by the power of the Holy Ghost.* For such men as have only the notions of it are of all men liable to the greatest sins, because there wanteth in their notions the power of love, which alone can constrain them to love Jesus Christ."[2] "Seek *a broken heart for sin,*" says Rutherford; "for without *that* there is no meeting with Christ." "Oh, how fairly have many ships been plying before the wind, that, in an hour's space, have been lying in the sea bottom! How many professors cast a golden lustre, as if they were pure gold, and yet are, under that skin and cover, but base and reprobate metal?" "False under-water, not seen in the ground of an enlightened conscience is dangerous; so is often falling, and sinning against light. Know this, that *those who never had sick nights or days in conscience for sin, cannot have peace with God* as will undercoat and break the flesh again, and end in a sad war, at death. Oh how fearfully are thousands beguiled with false hide-grown-over old sins, as if the soul were cured and healed!"[3]

"For the grace of God *that bringeth salvation* hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Savour Jesus Christ; Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all lawlessness, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."[4] And if you think, O Professor, that you have got "the grace of God,"

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[1] Hos. xiv. 5. [2] Bunyan's "Light for Them that Sit in Darkness."
[3] Rutherford's Letters, pp. 410, 146, 147. [4] Titus ii. 11-14.

and it does *not experimentally* teach you *this*, you are awfully deceiving yourself; for you have *not* got "the grace of God, *that bringeth salvation;*" and the word for *you*, therefore, is, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked:—for whatsoever a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap"—*not something else.* "For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."[1] And "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."[2] And the Apostle addressing believers in Christ Jesus, says, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."[3] For "they that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him;"[4] and "blessed are ye that sow *beside all waters.*"[5]

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[1] Gal. vi. 7, 8. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 50. [3] Gal. vi. 9.
[4] Psa. cxxvi. 5, 6. [5] Isa. xxxii. 20.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FORMATION OF THE DRY LAND.

"God hath His furnace everywhere,
And into it doth cast
His children; each He means to teach,
And bring to heaven at last.

"God will not have us steal His love,
Nor yet escape His ire;
But all who win shall smart for sin,
And know God has a fire.

"O sleepy soul, I pray thee, wake!
Behold God's furnace flame!
All those above, now filled with love,
Through tribulation came.

"True gold is melted in the fire
To purge it of its dross;
The anvil knows the faith that glows,
And glories in the cross.

"Mid smoke and flame with many a blow,
Mid loss of name and tears,
The upright soul doth reach the goal
Of love which casts out fears."

"How oft, when thunder clouds are nigh,
The brilliant arch illumes the sky,
Inviting man to praise and bless
The great Creator's faithfulness.
So, Lord, when doubt and darkness rise,
May faith behold, with steadfast eyes,
Thy mercy in the saddest hour,
And trust Thy promise and Thy power."

"Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than Sheol; what canst thou know; The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea."—JOB xi. 7-9.

"Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, Who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto Thee? Thou, Which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side."—PSA. lxxi. 19-21.

"Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for Jehovah will do great things."—JOEL ii. 21.

WE now come to the formation of "the dry land," and to the separation from it of "the depth," that had once entirely covered it; which we have seen to be emblematical of the "new creation" of God in the heart of a saved sinner. And as God said, when He "gathered together the waters under the heaven unto one place," "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed"[1]—thus "setting a bound that they may not pass over, that they turn *not again to cover the earth*":[2] for I "have placed," said He, "the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, *yet can they not pass over it*":[3]—so has He made a like decree also in this case: for He has said, "Sin *shall not have dominion over you:* for ye are not under the law, but under grace."[4] And as it took time to fashion the earth, and fit it to bring forth that which God had designed that it should produce: so likewise is this the case with the saved sinner.

From an examination of the crust of the earth, as well as from what we now see going on on its surface, we are naturally led to the conclusion, that before God's purposes with regard to it could have been fully accomplished, much must have passed over it, and great changes have been effected in its structure and character. The stony crust of the earth would have been broken up by volcanic action,[5] and the fragmentary portions, as well as the exterior surface

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[1] Job xxxviii. 11. [2] Psa. civ. 9. [3] Jer. v. 22.
[4] Rom. vi. 14. [5] See Psa. civ. 5-10.

exposed to atmospheric influences, and to the furious, as well as silent, action of the sea waves—the result of which combined action would be, (as indeed we see it exemplified in our own days,) the pulverization of the rocks, and the formation of an "earth," fully adapted for the purposes for which it was designed by its beneficent Creator. This period, therefore, in the world's history does not inaptly represent that stage, if I may so say, in the converted heart's experience, wherein many of its self-appliances and self-reliances are broken up, dissipated, and dispersed; and the heart in a great measure emptied of itself, and of its own devices, and rendered humble, meek, and contrite—and in fine reduced to that state, in which the good seed of the Word may take deep root in it, spring up, and bring forth fruit unto God's glory.

"I apprehend," says Newton, in his Letter on "Grace in the ear," "that . . . . for a season after we have known the Lord, we have usually the most sensible and distressing experience of our evil natures . . . Oh! the multiplied instances of stupidity, ingratitude, impatience, and rebellion to which my conscience has been witness! And as every heart knows its own bitterness, I have generally heard the like complaints from others of the Lord's people with whom I have conversed, even from those who have appeared to be eminently gracious and spiritual." The believer "does not meet with these things perhaps at first, nor every day. The Lord appoints occasions and turns in life, which try our spirits. There are particular seasons, when temptations are suited to our frames, tempers, and situations; and there are times when He is pleased to withdraw, and to permit Satan's approach, that we may feel how vile we are in ourselves. We are prone to spiritual pride, to self-dependence, to vain confidence, to create attachments and a train of evils. The Lord often discovers to us one single disposition by exposing us to another. He sometimes shows us what He can do for us and in us: and at other times how little we can do, and how unable we are

to stand without Him. By a variety of these exercises, through the overruling and edifying influences of the Holy Spirit," the believer "is trained up in a growing knowledge of himself and of the Lord. He learns to be more distrustful of his own heart, and to suspect a snare in every step he takes. The dark and disconsolate hours which he has brought upon himself in times past, make him doubly prize the light of God's countenance, and teach him to dread whatever might grieve the Spirit of God, and cause Him to withdraw again. The repeated and multiplied pardons which he has received, increase his admiration of, and the sense of his obligations to, the rich, sovereign abounding mercy of the Covenant. Much has been forgiven him, therefore he loves much, and therefore he knows how to forgive and pity others. He does not call evil good, or good evil; but his own experiences teach him tenderness and forbearance. He experiences a spirit of meekness towards those who are overtaken in a fault, and his attempts to restore such, are according to the pattern of the Lord's dealings with himself. In a word his character in my judgment is complete . . . . when the habitual frame of his heart answers to that passage in the prophet Ezekiel, Chap. xvi. 63. 'That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more' (to boast, complain, or censure), 'because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.'"[1]

Before, however, I illustrate this part of my subject, by reference to the experiences of the Lord's own people, I shall first have to speak more particularly of the earth itself; with a view of bringing out these analogies with greater clearness and distinctness.

If, then, we look at the formation of the earth, and its separation from the waters which once covered it; what a beautiful combination of its parts is there as a whole, for the

[1] Newton's Works (Tegg's edition), pp. 60, 61.

:oduction of the ends evidently proposed by its Almighty reator—the equator, for instance, wholly escaping the great ›ntinents of Europe and Asia, and traversing those of frica and America, where the breadth of the land has reatly decreased; thus exposing the greatest expanse of sea › the action of the sun's rays, and furnishing by evaporation n abundant supply of fertilizing rain for the earth; while ıe immense ranges of mountains are chiefly situated in hot ›untries, with a view of furnishing copious rains and large vers, for the same fertilizing purpose. Contemplating the xternal features of the earth, and noting likewise its division ıto varied continents and islands, and the marked separa-ons between its several parts, as well as the peculiar charac-ɜristics of one particular land, which Jehovah has styled the glory of all lands,"[1] we cannot fail to perceive that such ivisions and separations were intended for different peoples; nd that "When the Most High divided to the nations their ıheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set ıe bounds of the people according to the number of the ıildren of Israel."[2]

And what an infinite variety is there in the various por-ıns of the surface of the earth itself! "A slight survey of › features of the external world," says the Rev. Thomas lner, "is sufficient to show, that the tendency of their eral arrangement is to minister to the happiness of man, ·ive him pleasure in the act of contemplation, as well as :ontribute to his convenience. Its surface, so finely rsified, is eminently calculated for the gratification of its piers, and expands around them in every clime an array auty and grandeur, sometimes apart from each other, but blended in wild yet tasteful and imposing combinations. ·ever the traveller penetrates, he finds the terrestrial uration so arranged in ever-varying outline as to l before him an inviting picture of natural scenery, captivates, or soothes, or elevates, or excites the mind,

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[1] Ezek. xx. 6. [2] Deut. xxxii. 8.

and furnishes such pleasurable emotions as dull uniformity would not have yielded." And what lovely combinations are there upon its surface, of gentle slopes, bold hills, rugged rocks, or mountains chains; of woods, and forests, and of fertile prairies, and of plains; of streams, and rivers, of lakes, of waterfalls and of seas! And how infinitely varied likewise is the vegetation; and how exquisitely beautiful are its numerous trees and shrubs and flowers; all exhibiting the most perfect adaptation and design.

To descend for a moment or two to particulars. Speaking of the *flowers* of the earth, Dr. Love makes the following beautiful and appropriate remarks upon them. He says, "Upon these God has spread out matter, which the laborious bees convert into honey. He has also inscribed upon them many lessons of that wisdom, which is more precious than rubies.[1] 'The invisible things' of God—'even His eternal power and Godhead'—may be clearly seen in these productions of His hand.[2] Whence came the substance of which they are made? He created it. When it was not, He said—'Let it be.' There appears in them '*ἡ πολυποίκιλος σοφία τοῦ Θεοῦ*.'[3] Where were the models after which they were made? God had no models to work by. They are perfect originals. 'Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being His counsellor, hath taught Him? With whom took He counsel, and who instructed Him?'[4] When He began to work in creating, there was nothing; and, after matter existed, there was no form. The flowers are some of the 'wondrous works of Him, Who is perfect in Knowledge;'[5] exhibiting the beauty and rectitude of that infinite Mind, which gave to them a beauty, the idea of which He could take from nothing without Himself. The delicacy of a painter's judgment appears in the delicately-finished picture which he forms. In like manner, the perfection of the Divine Mind

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[1] Job xxviii. 18. [2] Rom. i. 20.

[3] *i.e.*, "the manifold," or greatly-diversified, "wisdom of God," Eph. iii. 10.

[4] Isa. xl. 13, 14. [5] Job. xxxvii. 16.

is to be discerned in these productions. And this may lead us to think of the Divine attributes, as they are exhibited in our own formation. For, as creatures, we are in the same rank with them. We are equally passive in respect of our creation: in the formation of our mind and bodies we contributed as little, as the flowers did in theirs.

"The Divine absolute dominion appears in the disposal of flowers, as regards the seasons and situations in which they are produced. He makes no consultation with this or the other flower, whether it shall be planted here, or in the plains of Asia, by the Thames, or the Tweed, or on the banks of the Nile. No more does He in regard to me. With equally absolute dominion, He 'hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of the habitation' of all men.[1] He makes the seed of this flower to fall and spring up here,—of another there. And, so, me He has planted here in His visible Church;—another, in all respects equal, He has made a wild Arabian.

"As God's absolute power appears in the bringing forth of the flowers out of their seed, and carrying them through the stages of growth, until they come at length to be resolved again into common dust; so it likewise appears in my being born, and in my growing up through infancy, childhood, youth, &c. And the same absolute power will carry me forward through all the stages of life which He has appointed to me,—until He bring me to that accident, or that decay of nature, which shall bring on the dissolution of this mortal body. These flowers grow up, open, spread, droop, wither, and are dissolved;—and that, from year to year: but God continues ever the same; He changes not. In like manner, the generations of men upon this earth pass before Him;—while He remains the same unchanged and unchangeable God, which He was in the days of the antediluvian patriarchs. And, when the whole frame of this earthly universe and of its surrounding heavens shall grow

[1] Acts xvii. 26.

old like a garment, and shall be taken down and folded up, He will continue the same.[1]

"Let me not fail then to read, in these fair productions, a declaration in miniature of what really happens to all earthly glory, beauty, and strength—of what has happened and is to happen to me, and to all men. 'Man cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down.'[2] 'As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more: but the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear Him.'[3] The flowers have a voice speaking to man—'Thou seest in us, what Thou art.'

"Let me consider and meditate on that wonderful product of Divine power and wisdom, the odoriferous perfume that proceeds from them,—and what of God may be seen in it. Let me, also, consider the organs on which its minute particles operate,—and how they are adapted, the one to the other; and also the effect of their action on these organs, in the impression communicated thereby to the animal spirits, and by them to the soul. Gross earth, being refined and sublimated, and conveyed to the immaterial substance within by means of the body to which it is united, acts upon it in the way of imparting cheerfulness and delight.

"Let me consider the colours of the flowers, and the mixture and disposal of these colours. An artist, to produce a good picture, requires both to have good colours, and to lay them on delicately. The beautiful tints of the flowers are produced, not by the laying on of gross colours, but by means of a curious motion of the juices contained in their imperceptible vessels, guided by the invisible Hand that clothes them with beauty.[4] And all circumstances are made use of for the advantageous disposing of the colours; as, the darker ground of the leaf, the form of the leaf, &c. In what a delicate manner are they inlaid;—in parallel lines, and with a wonderful texture of delicate threads on both sides!

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[1] Psa. cii. 26, 27. [2] Job xiv. 2. [3] Psa. ciii. 15-17. [4] Mat. vi. 28-30.

"Let me think, besides, on the form of each individual leaf,—on the form of every separate bunch of leaves,—on the form of every branch, and on that of the whole plant with all its foliage."[1]

But to take a wider range—not only are large portions of the earth's surface exquisitely beautiful; but even the ordinary sights and sounds of earth are grateful and pleasing to the senses of man: which are admirably adapted to appreciate and admire them. How lovely sometimes is "the morning spread upon the mountains"; when the sun, shining upon the light fleecy clouds that float in the blue sea above us, tints them with colours of so soft and delicate a nature as to defy the painter's art: while the soft light scattered through the leafy foliage of the trees, dances on the bright green turf, as the leaves are wafted to and fro by the gentle morning breeze; and the sweet songs of birds come floating to us on the air; as if to awaken thoughts of praise to Him, Who "gave" this "earth" "to the children of men";[2] and Whose nature, and Whose name is "Love."[3]

And is there not a majestic grandeur also in the tempest, when "the heavens become black with clouds and wind,"[4] the trees of the distant forest bend before the coming storm; and the frightened cattle run wildly about for shelter? And now the vivid lightning flash almost blinds the eyes of the beholder, to be instantly followed by so sharp a crash of thunder as if ten thousand yards of canvas had all been rent in pieces at a stroke; while the rain pours down in torrents; and a mighty oak is seen to have been shivered into atoms by the bolt—flash now following flash in rapid succession; while the thunder claps increase in loudness, as the storm attains its height; when having spent its fury, it at length subsides, to be succeeded perhaps, by the passing away of the heavy clouds, and the bursting out of the sunbeam to lighten up once more the scene with glory. Yes: God

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[1] "Memorials of the Rev. John Love, D.D.," vol. i., pp. 82-85.
[2] Psa. cxvi. 16. [3] 1 John iv. 16. [4] 1 Kings xviii. 45.

"thundereth with the voice of His excellency." He "thundereth marvellously with His voice."[1] "Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like Him?"[2] "The voice of Jehovah is upon the waters; the God of glory thundereth: Jehovah is upon many waters. The voice of Jehovah is powerful; the voice of Jehovah is full of majesty. The voice of Jehovah breaketh the cedars; yea, Jehovah breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. He maketh them also to skip like a calf! Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn. The voice of Jehovah divideth the flames of fire. The voice of Jehovah shaketh the wilderness; Jehovah shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh. The voice of Jehovah maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in His temple doth everyone speak of His glory. Jehovah sitteth upon the flood; yea, Jehovah sitteth King for ever. Jehovah will give strength unto His people; Jehovah will bless His people with peace."[3]

And as we contemplate the beauties of this fallen world, can we not perceive everywhere exhibited the most unequivocal proofs, not only of infinite intelligence, adaptation, order, and design; but that the whole is admirably adapted for the purposes for which it was created, and harmoniously combined for the accomplishment of those purposes—the entire economy of the whole being evidently designed for the good, as well as for the pleasure and happiness, of its occupants.

Now God has three modes, if I may so say, of carrying out His purposes with regard to this earth. The first is, either by the slow yet continuous action of the streams and rivers, upon the barren mountains or the plains, or the waves of the sea acting upon a rocky coast; or by the furious winter torrents and cascades upon the former, and the dashing of tempestuous seas upon the latter,[4] aided in all cases

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[1] Job xxxvii. 4, 5. [2] Job xl. 9. [3] Psa. xxix. 3-11.

[4] "The average force exerted by a wave of the Atlantic in winter is about one ton on the square foot, and on several occasions, both in the Atlantic and in the North Sea, the winter breakers have been known to exert a force of from three to three and-a-half tons on the same extent of

likewise by atmospheric influences acting in conjunction with these causes, by which means in course of time a detrition of the rocks and sterile ground takes place, which is ultimately formed into productive earth suitable for the growth and healthy development of the varied forms of vegetable life, which were designed to appear upon its surface. The second mode of God's dealing with this earth is, when He causes the mountain sides to slide down into the valleys beneath; or by a mighty earthquake, He casts them down altogether; and thrusts up hills and dales by volcanic action from beneath—thus fracturing the crust of the earth in all directions, by which means the configuration of the earth is completely altered, and its aspect is often rendered much more beautiful and pleasing. His third method (which is confined to the surface of the earth), is by terrific hurricanes and storms, which sometimes alter for a time the whole face of nature; but which occur less frequently: and yet these "stormy winds" and tempests, He tells us, are but the "fulfilling of His Word." [1]

The first is (if I may so say) God's ordinary method in His dealing with this earth; the second, in our day at least, is but an occasional one; while the third, is His extraordinary one; of which indeed it might be said, that "He giveth not account of any of His matters."[2] And I have alluded to these three methods of God's dealings with this

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surface. It is easy to understand, therefore, that the effects of such terrific shocks, repeated incessantly during the winter storms, must be disastrous. Mr. Stevenson tells of blocks of rock weighing between nine and ten tons each, having been washed together at a height of sixty feet, and of others weighing from six to thirteen tons, having been quarried out of their original beds seventy-five feet above the sea. He mentions also that one block, weighing eight tons, was driven by the force of the waves over very rough ground to a distance of about seventy feet, and this at a height of twenty feet. In the building of light-houses the force of the waves is often too apparent; huge stones are flung about like pebbles; iron fastenings are wrenched out and twisted as if they were ropes of straw."—*Toilers of the Deep*, for August, 1892.

[1] Psa. cxlviii. 8. [2] Job xxxiii. 13.

earth, because He thus deals analogously, in all these ways, with the souls of His people, of which indeed He has given us both examples and illustrations in His Divine Word. Thus we read, "And surely the mountain falling cometh to naught, and the rock is removed out of his place. The waters wear the stones; Thou washest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth; and Thou destroyest the hope of man."[1] "He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against Him, and hath prospered? Which removeth the mountains and they know not; which overturneth them in His anger."[2] "He putteth forth His hand upon the rocks; He overturneth the mountains by the roots."[3] "But Jehovah is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King; at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation."[4] "O God, Thou hast cast us off, Thou hast scattered us, Thou hast been displeased; O turn Thyself to us again. Thou hast made the earth to tremble; Thou hast broken it; heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh. Thou hast shewed Thy people hard things; Thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment."[5] God "toucheth the mountains, and they smoke."[6] "The voice of Thy thunder was in the heaven; the lightnings lightened the world; the earth trembled and shook. Thy way is in the sea, and Thy path in the great waters, and Thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron"[7]—the leading indeed of *both* being necessary; "for" although "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ;"[8] yet "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."[9] "For ye have not received the Spirit of

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[1] Job xiv. 18, 19. [2] Job ix. 4, 5.
[3] Job xxviii. 9. See also Nahum i. 5, 6 .[4] Jer. x. 10. [5] Psa. lx. 1-3.
[6] Psa. cxliv. 5. [7] Psa. lxxvii. 18-20. [8] John i. 17. [9] Gal. iii. 24-26.

bondage," or "servant-ship," "*again* to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption," or "son-ship," "whereby we cry, Abba, Father."[1]

Now all these three methods of God's dealing with this earth are referred to in one or other of these several passages of Scripture; and they are contrasted also analogously with like dealings by Him with the souls of the children of men. For, speaking of the first, just as in nature "the waters wear" away the stony ground and pulverize it, so as to transform it into fruitful earth; so does God, by the continuous action of the symbolical waters of which we have been speaking, *i.e.*, the outcome of the natural heart of the sinner, "wash away" and "destroy his hope;" which is of course always in the first instance centered in Himself. And every believer can testify from his own heartfelt experience, that God frequently makes use of his sins and follies and shortcomings, for the very purpose of showing him how vain have been his own efforts either to save, to help, or to sanctify himself; and thus forces him to look out of himself for succour, and to cast himself wholly upon the Lord. And though at times it may have seemed to himself that by reason of the "darkness" he "could not see," and that "abundance of waters" had "covered him;"[2] yet at God's command they had all dispersed again, and he then found that the promise had been fulfilled to him, that "all things work *together*"—not singly and alone—"for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."[3] This then is, as I said, God's ordinary method in His dealings with the souls of His people—the other two being extraordinary ones; the second being analogous to his dealings with Saul of Tarsus, or with one who needs some startling or amazing providence to rouse him from a spiritual lethargy; or to beat down, as in a moment, some groundless trust or confidence; of which I shall have to give an illustration in my next Chapter; while the third might refer to some terrific spiritual Tornado, such as Satan

[1] Rom. viii. 15. [2] Rom. viii. 28. [3] Job xxii. 11.

raised, when he was permitted to attack poor Job; and a remarkable instance of which I shall also have to give in my 10th Chapter.

These dealings of the Lord with His people *experimentally* convince them also that by nature they are indeed but fallen creatures; while His analogous dealings with the earth prove to us likewise that we are living also in a fallen world. Nevertheless fatal to life as earthquakes and volcanoes have sometimes been—God using these at times as instruments for the punishment of the ungodly,[1] though not always[2]—yet this very same agency, which has occasionally been so destructive to life within a limited area of the earth's surface, has operated in forming or upheaving the entire crust of the globe, and has thus not only produced the dry land of which we speak, but has also mainly contributed to the formation of the surface of the earth itself into those varied scenes of beauty and of loveliness which we now behold.

I am now of course chiefly speaking of times long past: but we have had this exemplified even in our own days; and I think I cannot do better than give here an illustration of this in the case of what is called "The Undercliff" in the Isle of Wight, portions of the east end of which were formed so late as the years 1810 and 1818. Sir H. Englefield thus graphically describes what he, rightly as I think, states to have been the process of its formation. "This part," he says, "at present exhibits a series of irregular terraces, each supported by vast fragments of rock bounded by a high wall of cliffs towards the north, and in general terminated towards the sea by a very broken and indented line of cliff. The whole forms a vast mass of confused ruins, in which no regularity of strata or materials can be traced.

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[1] Take the case of the awfully sudden distruction of the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum in August, A.D. 79; the modern excavations in which clearly prove to us that their inhabitants were a wicked and licentious people.

[2] Luke xiii. 1-5.

To account in any degree for this singular appearance, it will be necessary to recur to that period, remote beyond all reach of history, when, by some great convulsion this island was exposed to the sea in one vast range of perpendicular cliffs, such as would now appear if the whole Undercliff were removed from the wall of rock above it. The clay and sand strata attacked at their foot by the waves of the sea, in their front by wind, rain, and frosts, and above all, softened and washed away by the numerous springs which issue from under the rock, very soon became incapable of bearing the vast weight incumbent on them. The rock (divided by numerous periodical fissures) began to part at the fissure nearest to its front, gradually subsided and slipped in an inclined position (or perhaps sometimes, though not often, fell over) until its progress was stopped by the slope of clay on which it moved. But though at rest for a time, the same causes which set it in motion would again press it forward to the sea. Its fall had left a great front of rock and clay bare, while its upper surface formed a basin, in which the waters of the springs collected into a pool, moistening still more effectually the loosened clay below it, which, mixed with fragments of rock detached from the great mass in its fall, and full of interstices formed by the different hardness of its own several strata, was more rapidly washed away than when in its own bed. A second subsidence now took place; while from above another mass gave way, and by its weight urged the first fallen rock still further towards the sea, whose waves, carrying rapidly away all those parts easily soluble, united with the other causes of destruction to bring down fresh ruins from the cliff above. In this manner it is evident that the Undercliff was formed, most rapidly at first, but gradually slower as the causes of destruction tended to counteract their own effects; for, after every subsidence, the mass of fallen clay and rock formed itself into a more gentle slope, and which extending higher up against the face of the clay cliff, tended to keep it from mouldering, while the declivity of the slope itself rendered

the material already fallen less apt to slide. The action of the sea which washed away the clay from among the masses of rock at the bottom, caused those masses to come into closer contact, and by degrees forced them into a high and strong bulwark, while those rocks which had rolled further out, became long reefs, extending far into the water, and breaking in a great measure the force of the billows before they reached the shore. Vegetation now had time to cover the face of the ruins, and secured the surface of the slope from the effects of rain and frost; while the springs gradually formed regular courses through the little winding valleys among the heaps of ruin. Thus was the Undercliff gradually brought," he *might* have said, "to the" *lovely* "state in which we now see it."

And when we consider, that an infinity of fractures of the earth's surface, combined with the working of thousands of different forces of nature upon it, operating ever since the world began, have all combined to produce that infinite variety of lovely scenes which so charm and delight us; and that the more we study any one of these scenes of beauty, and note that each unnumbered line and outline, each form of curve and character, each shade of colour, and each subtle variety of surface and of sweep, is so exquisitely blended and harmonised, that its infinitude of beauty grows upon us and increases as we contemplate it; the more are we compelled to bow down and adore the infinite power, wisdom, and love of Him Who in His kindness has directed and overruled all these multitudinous operations of nature for the setting forth of His own glory, as well as for the benefit and advantages of His creatures. And as we contemplate such scenes, are we not also constrained to admit that He Who created these beauties, and so perfectly adapted our senses to discern and enjoy them, must not only be infinitely *good*, but must also Himself be infinitely *more lovely;* and can we wonder at the exclamation of the prophet, when he cried out in rapture, "How great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty!"[1]

[1] Zech. ix. 17.

And when we, who have been redeemed at such a price as the blood of His own Divine Son, know that He has thus redeemed us, that we may be "conformed to" His "image,"[1] and be "made *like*" *unto* "*Him*"[2]—that "the beauty of Jehovah our God" may thus "*be upon us;*"[3] shall we murmur at His dealings with us, however severe, when needful for the accomplishment of so glorious an end; when we know also that "He is the chiefest among ten thousand!" "yea, that He is *altogether lovely!*"[4] And do not our very souls rise in righteous indignation against those who would attempt to rob us of our hope, by denying the truths of His ever-blessed Word; which, under the teaching of His Divine Spirit, has taught us these things; or cease to wonder at the "sottish"[5] ignorance, and blindness of those would-be "wise men,"[6] who deny either the being and existence of God, or His handiwork in Creation; and attribute all these exquisite contrivances and beauties to evolution, or to chance! or be surprised at the "indignation"[7] of the Lord Himself against such; and at their terrible and awful doom, at His appearing; "when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day?"[8]

And however men may wilfully shut their eyes to these things now, there *is* a day coming when their eyes will be opened—aye, and when they will see,[9] and have to acknowledge also, the justice of God in their condemnation: for He hath said, "that at the name of Jesus *every* knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, *and things under the earth;* and that *every* tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."[10] And although the wicked are now "*driven* from light into darkness, and *chased* out of the world"[11] showing the utmost resistance on their part; dispute as to the equity of God's

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[1] Rom. viii. 29. [2] Phil. iii. 21; 1 John iii. 2. [3] Psa. xc. 17.
[4] Cant. v. 10, 16. [5] Jer. iv. 22. [6] Jer. viii. 9. [7] Isa. xxxiv. 2.
[8] 2 Thes. i. 8-10. [9] Isa. xxvi. 11. [10] Phil. ii. 10-11. [11] Job xviii. 18.

dealings with them, even in the separate state;[1] and will actually find fault with the Lord Himself for His rejection of them at His coming:[2] yet *after the judgment*, when all the pleas that they can ever offer will have been rejected—it will be different with them then: for "*these shall go away*" —no more *driving* now—"into everlasting punishment"[3] —"*this* shall ye have of Mine hand, *ye shall lie down* in sorrow."[4]

Indeed God sometimes shows such sinners the awful justice of their doom even in this life, as He did to "the noble Altamont," spoken of by Young: who on his death-bed, acknowledged the justice of his eternal condemnation, and cried out in anguish, "O Thou blasphemed, but most indulgent Lord God! hell itself is a refuge if it hide me from Thy frown!" Poor Coleridge, also, who, with his wonderful powers of mind, was yet the slave of a base passion—for his brother-in-law, Robert Southey, writing of him to Mr. Cottle in 1814, stated that "he had been in the habit of taking of laudanum from two quarts a week to a pint a day," with "a frightful consumption of spirits added"—writing of himself in the same year says, "I have had more than a glimpse of what is meant by death and outer darkness, and the worm that dieth not—and that all the hell of the reprobate, is no more inconsistent with the love of God, than the blindness of one who has occasioned loathsome and guilty diseases to eat out his eyes, is inconsistent with the light of the sun." And in the same year, writing to Mr. Wade, he says, "Conceive a poor miserable wretch, who for many years has been attempting to beat off pain by a constant recurrence to the vice that reproduces it. . . I used to think that the text in St. James, that 'he who offended in one point, offended in all' very harsh: but I now feel the awful, the tremendous truth of it. In the one crime of OPIUM, what crime have I not made myself guilty of! Ingratitude to my Maker! and to my benefactors—Injustice!

[1] Luke xvi. 23-31.
[2] Mat. vii. 22, 23; xxv. 41-44.
[3] Mat. xxv. 46.
[4] Isa. l. 11.

and unnatural cruelty to my poor children!—self-contempt for my repeated promise—breach, nay, too often actual falsehood!"

There is every reason, however, to believe, that in *his* case, the Lord graciously granted him "repentance unto life:" for a few days before his death, in a letter to his godchild, Adam Steinmetz K———, he says, "I thus, on the very brink of the grave, solemnly bear witness to you that the Almighty Redeemer, most gracious in His promises to them that truly seek Him, is faithful to perform what He has promised, and has preserved under all my pains and infirmities the inward peace that passeth all understanding, with the supporting assurance of a reconciled God, Who will not withdraw His Spirit from me in the conflict, and in His own time will deliver me from the evil one." And indeed he gave undoubted evidence of the fact, by leaving the following instructions with Mr. Wade, which he desired might be carried out after his death. "After my death, I earnestly entreat, that a full and unqualified narration of my wickedness, and of its guilty cause, may be made public, that at least some little good may be effected by the direful example."[1]

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[1] See Cottle's "Recollections," &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FORMATION OF THE DRY LAND—continued.

"Be Thou my Friend, and look upon my heart,
Lord Jesus, Son of man!
Each seed of good or ill that there has part
Do Thou in mercy scan,
The burning springs there lurking,
O Lord, Thou canst control,
And each wild passion, working
Within my sinful soul.

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"Yes! be my Friend, and look upon my heart,
On all that's hidden there;
The deeper guilt that stings me with its dart,
The unknown sins I bear,
The passions that distress me,
Let Thy pure presence slay;
The sorrows that oppress me
Before Thee flee away.

"Oh, shine upon me with Thy holy light,
When gathering gloom I see,
And leave me not in tribulation's night,
But send sweet peace to me!
The chains of sin dissever,
Blind fancy's wildest play:
Then, then, my Lord, for ever
Take grief and sin away!"

"Sweet words of peace and love
Christ whispers me:
Bearing my soul above
Life's troubled sea.
This be my portion blest,
On my Redeemer's breast
In peaceful trust to rest:
He cares for me."

"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake."—PHIL. i. 29.

"My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."—HEB. xii. 5-8, 11.

For "we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God." —ACTS xiv. 22.

"Knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Which is given unto us."—ROM. v. 3-5.

I COME now to illustrate the principles unfolded in my last Chapter by living examples: but I shall in this Chapter only refer to the two first of God's methods of dealing with saved souls, and reserve the third, which is an extraordinary one, to another Chapter.

As to God's ordinary method of dealing with saved souls, it is difficult to make a selection: because His dealings in this respect usually extend over a lifetime: but I think we shall find in the experience of Richard Williams, a surgeon, who was a Catechist to the Patagonian Missionary Society in Terra del Fuego, a very remarkable illustration of this aspect of our subject—albeit extending only in this instance over a limited period of his life-time.

Passing, therefore, over his conversion, which is not now within the scope of our enquiry, I come at once to the point in question. He says "It was on the 15th day of September, 1846, that I was taken ill. It is now September, 1847, when I am writing this. The delightful feeling of the first few days of convalescence I remember well. Joyfully exulting in the interposition of Divine mercy, which had brought me *out of thick darkness into the glorious light of truth,* oh, what a heaven flowed through my soul! Holiness with its celestial gilding seemed to change every object around me. The world was no longer the same world; its people no

longer the same beings. Myself and my fellows I no longer regarded as creatures of a moment's duration, but I saw Eternity impressed as a seal on the whole generation of men. The universe was no longer a confused assemblage of indistinct parts, moving towards a gloomy terminus, but, as far as the Divine purposes were concerned, a bright whole of uniform perfection, and the entire expanse filled with love, unbounded love. God Himself seemed to move everywhere. All was joy to my soul. *I looked on myself as a brand plucked from the burning*, and rejoiced in the sure hope of salvation. Jesus was most precious to me—my glory and infinite joy. The Bible hitherto a sealed book, was now a river of water to my thirsty soul. I was astounded with its contents. As I turned over its pages, wonder upon wonder ravished my delighted heart. I felt that I would care to live only for the sake of reading it. *It was a glorious light.* At times its heavenly rays would subdue me into a mellow and peaceful benignity; at others, rouse me into ecstatic bliss. Everywhere was the authority, the love, of God recognised. Its power to command my obedience was as the thunder-clad arm of Omnipotence; and its pleadings for holiness were as the gentle whisperings of love, to which my heart, my mind, my soul answered assent. *How I wondered at my former darkness!* How amazed did I feel that the precious light had so long shone in my way, and I never had perceived it! I resolved to make it the absolute rule of my life.

"These first days were as though they had been a foretaste of heavenly peace. *Never shall I forget my first mortification at finding that sin still existed within me.* There had been no actual committal of an offence that my conscience charged me with; yet a sudden and unexpected change had come over me. *There was a cloudiness in my mind;* my faith was dim; my heart had ceased to exult. It was as though all had been a bright and glorious dream, and I had now awakened to the stern realities of a cold and miserable world. *Alas, the bitterness of that moment!* I

strove to recall my hopes—they seemed delusion. I read my Bible—*the bright revealing light* which had heretofore almost made the very print more clear *was gone;* and, although I still knew it to be the Word of God, the page had ceased to kindle rapture and inspire emotion. I knew not how to account for this state. I had believed that the work of change and renovation had been completed, at least carried to so high a degree that it was impossible I could wilfully sin against God again. I abhorred the thought, *yet here I was in darkness, and sin palpably abounding in my heart. How sad was the sight of myself!* It was the first glance at the inward corruption and depravity of my heart. *It was the first of a series of painful but important lessons,* which convinced me that God had only hitherto instructed me in the first principles, and laid the foundation for my faith; but that *the work of grace had to be carried on,* and an absolute change of heart effected, *by many a severe and fiery ordeal.*"[1]

Having, however, implicitly yielded himself to God, these "severe and fiery ordeals" were soon made wondrously efficacious in his case: for within a comparatively limited period, he again writes, "Thursday, January 9—Last night I remarkably experienced the force of St. Paul's words, Eph. iii. 16. I literally felt the mind of Christ strengthening me by His Spirit in the inner man. A powerful temptation to view our present circumstances with apprehension was forced into my mind. *I felt that it was a device of Satan, and I instantly fastened my hold on the Lord Jesus.* Delightfully did I feel that, leaning on His power, I feared no evil; and, with the sense of His presence to cheer and bless me, I had 'a heart for any fate.' *Never did I experience so vividly that it was not I myself, but 'Christ in me,' that won the victory;* or rather, that it was faith which seized hold on Christ's right arm, and thus wrought the

[1] Memoir of Richard Williams, Surgeon: Catechist to the Patagonian Missionary Society in Terra del Fuego, pp. 25-28.

triumph. I seemed at the time as if, in my complete nothingness, I had a power in my hand with which I could resist the devil, and stand firm against all his wiles."

Then again, further on, he writes, "Friday, January 10, Eleven p.m.—I bless and praise God that *this day has been, I think, the happiest of my life.* The fire of Divine Love has been burning on the mean altar of my heart, and the torch-light of faith has been in full trim, so that I have only had to waive it to the right hand and left, in order to discern spiritual things in heavenly places. *With it* this poor heart of mine, that so long has been *a dark cavern wherein with mournful consciousness of sin and vileness* I have withdrawn myself and fainted at the rebuke of the Word, *has now been lighted up,* and shewn to me both swept and garnished, sprinkled as it is with the blood of Christ Jesus. And now it is made a temple-shrine for an indwelling God. And lo! *I have come out from my darkness, and am made light in the Lord,* and like Elijah standing on the Mount before the Lord, I no longer pine in the sadness of gloom and disappointment, *as not understanding 'the ways of God with men,'* and His providential as well as spiritual guidance of His children; but awakening up from my reverie, and finishing my journey in the wilderness, I learn how great is the mystery of godliness, and *how needful is the chastening of the Lord to His children, whilst as a Father He* afflicts us for our profit, and *humbles and abases us* by the rod of His hand, *and gives us to feel our poverty of spirit, our helplessness, unworthiness, as a needful preparation to our beholding His glory,* and hearing the still small voice of his love. To-day, the voice of the Lord is sounded in my ears, 'Come up hither'; and, I have ascended up on high, and dwell with God in love. Now, now, now, the Lord Jesus is in me the hope of eternal glory."[1]

And then, after undergoing various other trials and difficulties, which all "worked together for his good,"

[1] Memoir, &c., pp. 165-167.

further on in his history, we have this sweet and precious testimony:—"After the trials I encountered on Saturday, and our knocking about was over, the sleep that followed was, I think, the most refreshing that I ever enjoyed; not so much because it was a balmy restorative to my debilitated body, but because if ever the whisperings of Almighty love spoke tranquillity to the soul of man, and breathed a continued flow of Divine consolation upon his heart, I felt them that night. I was so to speak talking with the Lord, and His grace supplied me with such rich treasure of wisdom in the Discourse, and His unction so made the purport of my thoughts to diffuse a precious odour and a rich influence around me, that I could very well have thought I was in Paradise. I might have thought so, but that the subject-matter of my communings with the Lord, was the service, the joyful, heart-felt service, I shall render unto Him in this my life-time, the period of sojourn here on earth. My heart seemed to tell the Lord how willingly, how gladly, my poor all shall be given unto Him, to spend and be spent for Him alone; and how I shall triumph with heavenly delight, whilst glorying that, by the power of His grace, I was able to win souls to Christ. And whilst such were my thoughts, the Lord seemed to accept me in all my proffered service, and to pour upon me the blessing of His grace, so that He was unto me as the dew unto Israel. Communion heavenly and blessed! earnest of joys to come, and foretaste of that inheritance undefiled and that fadeth not away, where I shall see Him face to face, yea, behold Him as He is, not even the transparent vail of a Divine faith being betwixt Him and me! How transcendently glorious is the further assurance, that when all do see Him as He is, we shall be like Him, partakers of His Divine nature, and sharers of His glorious image. O God, my Lord, for ever be Thy name adored."[1]

It would be well, indeed, if *all* the Lord's people could thus "yield themselves unto God,"[2] "in the obedience of

[1] Memoir, &c., pp. 213, 214. [2] Rom. vi. 13.

faith;"[1] for they would no doubt far sooner "enter into rest,"[2] and "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."[3] But I must pass on to the next case, which furnishes us with a very remarkable illustration of God's second method of dealing with saved souls, I mean the one, which is analogous to His "putting forth His hand upon the rocks," and "overturning the mountains in His anger."

This gentleman, having been an atheist, was subsequently brought to the knowledge of the truth; and although his conversion was undoubtedly a genuine one; yet his knowledge was limited, and, at the time referred to, he needed some striking Divine interposition to rouse him from his lethargy. I again pass over his awakening, as in the former case, and come at once to his account of this interposition; which in this case was a dream: "for God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed. Then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that He may withdraw men from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword."[4]

The writer says, "I often now speculate with great interest on the question, whether the same interference of Providence to stimulate us to better things can be traced in other's mental history which I can trace in my own. The period now reached is marked by one of them. I no longer reasoned; and I was in a mood to resist the impression of warning from any natural danger. I was conducted as far as reason and natural events could conduct me by their agency. Yet, melancholy as was my state of feeling, it still was characterized by the absence of all attempts to blind myself to the truth. It was the recognition of the truth in all its dread hopelessness. I saw all the warning I could see—and that all was not enough.

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[1] Rom. xvi. 26. [2] Heb. iv. 3 [3] 1 Pet. i. 8. [4] Job xxxiii. 14-18.

"It is, in short, clear to the most casual survey, that *something more than an ordinary event was needed for my deliverance from this morbid state of feeling.* I consider the circumstances I am about to relate as exhibiting such a preternatural interference by the Divine Helper; His profound Knowledge of our nature; His unfailing attention to our necessities; His application of the principles of Equity He has laid down for our conduct to His own treatment of us. *I was not wilfully rejecting Him, but only fearful He had rejected me:* and *He condescended, by an extraordinary operation, to neutralize the mischievous notion till it could be done away with by the Word of His grace.*

"The occurrence I speak of was a dream. I am not aware that any peculiar irregularity preceded it. My recollection is to the effect that I was just going on in the usual way with my ordinary business: and I believe, through having thrown off all care, and given myself more than ordinary opportunities of relaxation and amusement I enjoyed at the time a higher state of animal health than either I did before or since. If some should be inclined to attribute it to indigestion, I can answer, I never enjoyed better digestion than at the time. My job was a very profitable and prosperous one; I had society I was very much attached to within a short distance of me, where I spent large portions of my time; friends were more than ordinarily plentiful with me; lastly, I never have been a dreamer all my life, either since or before. I think I cannot, except during the illness that followed this period, recollect dreaming a dozen times during my life. I suppose it would be difficult to find anyone who rests more composedly: my sleep is so perfect that four or five hours of it will re-invigorate me after six-and-forty hours of mental or bodily toil. In short there was just every reason why I should not dream, with none why I should. The dream itself, meantime, such as it was, may be told in a few words:—

"*I found myself existing in some awful prison. No words were uttered: neither was there either darkness or*

light—only I knew I was lost. Powers of intolerable strength gathered in upon me from every side. Thought shrank, as it were, to a point—ceased. Feeling expanded to an inconceivable extent: and I existed, a sensation of horror;—but oh! of what awful capacity!

"I had seen nothing—I had heard nothing; yet that dream seemed for months the one only thing I was conscious of. I awoke, but with no start; calm as the starlight and frozen seas;—as it were alive by force of agony. I saw the open entrance of the hut; the pit and the log motionless in the moonlight in front; the little flat beyond full of thin mist; the faint forms of the trees on the narrow belt of forest beyond. But whilst *I saw* all this as clearly as I could see it without, *I felt* the dream as strongly as I could feel it within. There was an utter severance of outward and inward things; the perception of neither was varied, but they were, as it were, disconnected by a great gap. *I grew suddenly sensible that the one was no more than a fragile creation of the organs of sense, which might crumble in an instant into nothingness*—the mere vision of the eyes; *but the other perdurable, necessary, absolute, which springing as it did within the soul, might last as long as the soul itself.*

"This dream lies at the bottom of immense effects on my character."[1]

In my sixth Chapter, I have given a few extracts from the Rev. David Brainerd's account of his religious experiences, and compared them with several passages of Scripture, with a view of tracing out the analogies between God's dealings in nature and in grace, and I have now, therefore, to give the full account; which treats, not only of his conversion, but also enters into many details of God's dealings with him in training and fitting him for the wonderful work which he had destined for him to do among the North American Indians. The account is a long one; but as it is a deeply interesting one, and marvellously

[1] From "Testimony to the Truth; or, the Autobiography of an Atheist," pp. 144-146.

illustrates the several points we have been considering, I have ventured to transcribe it in full.

He says, "Some time in the beginning of winter, 1738, *it pleased God* on one Sabbath-day morning, as I was walking out for some secret duties, as I remember, *to give me on a sudden such a sense of my danger and of the wrath of God, that I stood amazed;* and my former good frames, that I had pleased myself with, all presently vanished; and *from the view that I had of my sin and vileness, I was much distressed* all that day, fearing the vengeance of God would soon overtake me; I was much dejected, and kept much alone, and sometimes begrudged the birds and beasts their happiness, because they were not *exposed to eternal misery as I evidently saw I was.* And thus I lived from day to day, being frequently in great distress; sometimes there appeared great mountains before me to obstruct my hopes of mercy; and *the work of conversion appeared so great, I thought I should never be the subject of it;* but used, however, to pray and cry to God, and perform other duties with great earnestness, and hoped by some means to make the case better. And though I, hundreds of times renounced all pretences of any worth in my duties, as I thought, even in the season of the performance of them, and often confessed to God that I deserved nothing for the very best of them, but eternal condemnation; yet still I had a secret latent hope of recommending myself to God by my religious duties; and when I prayed affectionately, and my heart seemed in some measure to melt, I hoped God would be thereby moved to pity me, my prayers then looked with some appearance of goodness in them, and I seemed to mourn for sin; and then I could, in some measure, venture on the mercy of God in Christ, as I thought; though the preponderating thought and foundation of my hope was some imagination of goodness in my heart-meltings, and flowing of affections in duty, and sometimes extraordinary enlargements therein.

"Some time in February, 1738-9, I set apart a day for secret fasting and prayer, and spent the day in almost

incessant cries to God for mercy, that *He would open my eyes to see the evil of sin and the way of life by Jesus Christ*, and *God was pleased* that day *to make considerable discoveries of my heart to me.* But still I trusted in all the duties I performed, though there was no manner of goodness in the duties I then performed, there being no manner of respect to the glory of God in them, nor any such principle in my heart: yet God was pleased to make my endeavours that day a means to show me my helplessness in some measure.

"Sometimes I was greatly encouraged, and imagined that God loved me, and was pleased with me, and thought I should soon be reconciled to God; while the whole was founded on mere presumption, arising from enlargement in duty, or flowing of affections, or some good resolutions, and the like. And when, *great distress began to arise, or a sight of my vileness, and nakedness*, and inability to deliver myself from a sovereign God, I used to put off the discovery, as what I could not bear. Once, I remember, a terrible pang of distress seized me, and the thoughts of renouncing myself, and standing naked before God, stripped of all goodness, were so dreadful to me, that I was ready to say to them, as Felix to Paul, 'Go thy way for this time.' *Thus, though I daily longed for greater conviction of sin, supposing that I must see more of my dreadful state in order to a remedy; yet, when the discoveries of my vile, hellish heart were made to me, the sight was so dreadful, and showed me so plainly my exposedness to damnation, that I could not endure it.* I constantly strove after whatever qualifications I imagined others obtained before the reception of Christ, in order to recommend me to His favour. Sometimes I felt the power of a hard heart, and supposed it must be softened before Christ would accept of me: and when I felt any meltings of heart, I hoped now the work was almost done: and hence, when my distress still remained I was wont to murmur at God's dealings with me; and thought, when others felt their hearts softened, God showed them mercy; but my distress remained still.

Sometimes I grew remiss and sluggish, without any great conviction of sin, for a considerable time together; but after such a season, convictions sometimes seized me more violently. One night I remember in particular, when I was walking solitarily abroad, *I had opened to me such a view of my sin, that I feared the ground would cleave asunder under my feet, and become my grave, and send my soul quick into hell before I could get home.* And though I was forced to go to bed lest my distress should be discovered by others, which I much feared, yet I scarce durst sleep at all; for I thought it would be a great wonder if I should be out of hell in the morning. And though my distress was sometimes thus great, yet I greatly dreaded the loss of convictions, and returning back to a state of carnal security, and to my former insensibility of impending wrath: which made me exceeding exact in my behaviour, lest I should stifle the motions of God's Spirit. When at any time I took a view of my convictions of my own sinfulness, and thought the degree of them to be considerable, I was wont to trust in my convictions; but this confidence, and the hopes that arose in me from it, of soon making some notable advances towards deliverance, would ease my mind, and I soon became more senseless and remiss: but then again, when I discerned my convictions to grow languid, and I thought them about to leave me, this immediately alarmed and distressed me. Sometimes I expected to take a large step and get very far towards conversion, by some particular opportunity or means I had in view.

"The many disappointments, and great distresses and perplexity I met with, put me into a most horrible frame of contesting with the Almighty; with an inward vehemence and virulence, finding fault with His ways of dealing with mankind. I found great fault with the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity; and my wicked heart often wished for some other way of salvation than by Jesus Christ. And *being like the troubled sea* and my thoughts confused, I used to contrive to escape the wrath of God by some other

means, and had strange projections, full of Atheism, contriving to disappoint God's designs and decrees concerning me, or to escape God's notice, and hide myself from Him. But when, upon reflection, I saw all these projects were vain and would not serve me, and that I could contrive nothing for my own relief, this would throw my mind into the most horrid frame, to wish there was no God, or to wish there were some other God that could control Him. These thoughts and desires were the secret inclinations of my heart, that were frequently acting before I was aware; but, alas! they were mine, although I was affrighted with them when I came to reflect on them: when I considered of it, it distressed me to think, that *my heart was so full of enmity against God;* and it made me tremble, lest God's vengeance should suddenly fall upon me. I used to imagine my heart was not so bad, as the Scriptures and some other books represented. Sometimes I used to take much pains to work it up into a good frame, an humble submissive disposition; and hoped there was then some goodness in me; but it may be on a sudden, the thoughts of the strictness of the law, or the Sovereignty of God, *would so irritate the corruption of my heart,* that I had so watched over, and hoped I had brought to a good frame, *that it would break over all bounds, and burst forth on all sides, like floods of waters when they break down their dam.* But being sensible of the necessity of a deep humiliation in order to a saving union with Christ, I used to set myself to work in my own heart those convictions that were requisite in such humiliation; as, a conviction that God would be just if He cast me off for ever; and that, if ever God should bestow mercy on me, it would be mere grace, though I should be in distress many years first, and be ever so much engaged in duty; that God was not in the least obliged to pity me the more for all past duties, cries, and tears. These things I strove to the utmost to bring myself to a firm belief of, and hearty assent to; and hoped that now I was brought off from myself, and truly humbled and bowed to the Divine Sovereignty; and was

wont to tell God in my prayers, that now I had those very dispositions of soul that He required, and on which He shewed mercy to others, and thereupon to beg and plead for mercy to me. But when I found no relief, and was still oppressed with guilt and fears of wrath, my soul was in a tumult, and *my heart rose against God as dealing hardly with me.* Yet then my conscience flew in my face, putting me in mind of my late confession to God of His justice in my condemnation. And *this giving me a sight of the badness of my heart,* threw me again into distress, and I wished I had watched my heart more narrowly, to keep it from breaking out against God's dealings with me, and I even wished I had not pleaded for mercy on account of my humiliation, because thereby I had lost all my seeming goodness.

"Thus scores of times, I vainly imagined myself humbled and prepared for saving mercy.

"While I was in this distressed, bewildered, and tumultuous state of mind, the corruption of my heart was especially irritated with these things following:—

"1. The strictness of the Divine law. For I found it was impossible for me, after my utmost pains, to answer the demands of it. I often made new resolutions and as often broke them. I imputed the whole to carelessness, and the want of being more watchful, and used to call myself a fool for my negligence. But when, upon a stronger resolution, and greater endeavours, and close application of myself to fasting and prayer, I found all attempts fail, then I quarrelled with the law of God, as unreasonably rigid. I thought if it extended only to my outward actions and behaviour I could bear with it; but I found it condemned me for my evil thoughts, and the sins of my heart, which I could not possibly prevent. I was extremely loath to give up, and own my utter helplessness in this matter: but after repeated disappointments, thought that, rather than perish, I could do a little more still, especially if such and such circumstances might but attend my endeavours and strivings;

I hoped that I should strive more earnestly than ever, if the matter came to extremity, though I could never find the time to do my utmost, in the manner I intended: and this hope of future more favourable circumstances, and of doing something great hereafter, kept me from utter despair in myself, and from seeing myself fallen into the hands of a Sovereign God, and dependent on nothing but free and boundless grace.

"2. Another grievance was, that faith alone was the condition of salvation; that God would not come down to lower terms, that He would not promise life and salvation upon my sincere and hearty prayers and endeavours. That word, Mark xvi. 16, 'He that believeth not shall be damned,' cut off all hope there: and I found that faith was the sovereign gift of God; that I could not get it as of myself, and could not oblige God to bestow it upon me by any of my performances, Eph. ii. 1-8. 'This,' I was ready to say, 'is a hard saying, who can bear it?' I could not bear that all that I had done should stand for mere nothing, who had been very conscientious in duty, and had been exceeding religious a great while, and had, as I thought, done much more than many others that had obtained mercy. I confessed, indeed, the vileness of my duties; but then, what made them at that time seem vile, was my wandering thoughts in them; *not because I was all over defiled like a devil, and the principle corrupt from whence they flowed, so that I could not possibly do anything that was good.* And therefore I called what I did, by the name of honest, faithful endeavours; and could not bear it that God had made no promises of salvation to them.

"3. Another thing was, that I could not find out what faith was; or what it was to believe, and come to Christ. I read the calls of Christ made to the weary and heavy laden, but could find no way that He directed them to come in. I thought I would gladly come, if I knew how, though the path of duty directed to were ever so difficult. I read Mr. Stoddart's 'Guide to Christ,' which I trust was, in the hand

of God, the happy means of my conversion, and my heart rose against the author: for though he told me my very heart all along under convictions, and seemed to be very beneficial to me in his directions, yet here he failed, he did not tell me anything I could do that would bring me to Christ, but left me, as it were, *with a great gulph between me and Christ*, without any direction to get through. For *I was not yet effectually and experimentally taught, that there could be no way prescribed, whereby a natural man could, of his own strength, obtain that which is supernatural, and which the highest angel cannot give.*

"4. Another thing that I found a great inward opposition to, was the sovereignty of God. I could not bear that it should be wholly at God's pleasure, to save or damn me just as He would. That passage, Rom, ix. 11-23, was a constant vexation to me, especially verse 21. The reading or meditating on this always destroyed my seeming good frames; when I thought I was almost humbled, and almost resigned to God's Sovereignty, the reading or thinking on this passage would make my enmity against the Sovereignty of God appear. And when I came to reflect on my inward enmity and blasphemy that arose on this occasion, I was the more afraid of God, and driven further from my hopes of reconciliation with Him; and *it gave me such a dreadful view of myself*, that I dreaded more than ever to see myself in God's hands, and at His Sovereign disposal, and it made me more averse than ever to submit to His Sovereignty; for I thought God designed my damnation.

"*All this time the Spirit of God was powerfully at work with me;* and I was inwardly pressed to relinquish all self-confidence, all hopes of ever helping myself by any means whatsoever; *and the conviction of my lost estate was sometimes so clear and manifest before my eyes, that it was as if it had been declared to me in so many words, 'It is done, it is done; it is for ever impossible to deliver yourself.'* For about three or four days my soul was thus distressed, especially at some turns, when for a few moments I seemed

to myself lost and undone; but then would shrink back immediately from the sight, because I dared not venture myself into the hands of God, as wholly helpless, and at the disposal of His Sovereign pleasure. I dared not see that important truth concerning myself, that *I was 'dead in trespasses and sins.'* But when I had, as it were, thrust away these views of myself at any time, I felt desirous to have the same discoveries of myself again; for I greatly feared being given over of God to final stupidity. When I thought of putting it off to a more convenient season, the conviction was so close and powerful with regard to the present time, that it was the best time, and probably the only time, that I dare not put it off. *It was the sight of truth concerning myself, truth respecting my state, as a creature fallen and alienated from God*, and that consequently could make no demands on God for mercy, but must subscribe to the absolute Sovereignty of the Divine being; the sight of the truth, I say, my soul shrank away from, and trembled to think of beholding. Thus, 'He that doeth evil,' as all unregenerate men continually do, 'hates the light' of truth, neither cares to come to it, because it will reprove his deeds, and show him his just deserts. John iii. 20. And though some time before I had taken much pains, as I thought, to submit to the Sovereignty of God, yet I mistook the thing; and did not once imagine, that seeing and being made experimentally sensible of this truth, which my soul now so much dreaded and trembled at a sense of, was the frame of my soul that I had been so earnest in pursuit of heretofore; for I had ever hoped, that when I had attained to that humiliation which I supposed necessary to go before faith, then it would not be fair for God to cast me off, but now I saw it was so far from any goodness in me to own myself spiritually dead and destitute of all goodness, that, on the contrary, my mouth would be for ever stopped by it; and it looked as dreadful to me to see myself, and the relation I stood in to God, as a sinner and a criminal, and He a great Judge and Sovereign, as it would be to a poor

trembling creature to venture off some high precipice. And hence I put it off for a minute or two, and tried for better circumstances to do it in; either I must read a passage or two, or pray first, or something of the like nature; or else put off my submission to God's Sovereignty with an objection that I did not know how to submit. But the truth was, I could see no safety in owning myself in the hands of a Sovereign God, and confessing that I could lay no claim to anything better than damnation.

"But after a considerable time spent in such like exercises and distresses, one morning, while I was walking in a solitary place, as usual, *I at once saw that all my contrivances and projections to effect or procure deliverance and salvation for myself, were utterly in vain: I was brought quite to a stand, as finding myself totally lost.* I had thought many times before, that the difficulties in my way were very great; but *now I saw, in another and very different light, that it was for ever impossible for me to do anything towards helping or delivering myself.* I then thought of blaming myself, that I had not done more, and been more engaged, while I had opportunity; for it seemed now as if the season of doing was for ever over and gone; but I instantly saw, that let me have done what I would, it would not more have tended to my helping myself, than what I had done; that *I had made all the pleas I ever could have made to all eternity; and that all my pleas were vain.* The tumult that had been before in my mind was now quieted; and I was something eased of that distress which I felt, whilst struggling against a sight of myself, and of the Divine Sovereignty. *I had the greatest certainty that my state was for ever miserable, for all that I could do; and wondered, and was almost astonished, that I had never been sensible of it before.* All the time while I remained in this state, my notions respecting my duties were quite different from what I had ever entertained in times past. Before this, the more I did in duty the more I thought God was obliged to me, or, at least, the more hard I thought it would

be for God to cast me off; though at the same time I confessed, and thought I saw that there was no goodness or merit in my duties: but now the more I did in prayer, or any other duty, the more I saw I was indebted to God for allowing me to ask for mercy; for I saw it was self-interest that led me to pray, and that I had never once prayed from any respect to the glory of God. Now I saw there was no necessary connexion between my prayers and the bestowment of Divine mercy: that they laid not the least obligation upon God to bestow His grace upon me; and that there was no more virtue and goodness in them, than there would be in my paddling my hand in the water, which was the comparison I had then in my mind; and this because they were not performed from any love to God. I saw that I had been heaping up my devotions before God, fasting, praying, &c., pretending, and indeed really thinking at some times, that I was aiming at the glory of God; whereas I never once truly intended it, but only my own happiness. I saw that as I had never done anything for God, I had no claim to lay to anything from God but perdition, on account of my hypocrisy and mockery. O how different did my duties now appear from what they used to do! I used to charge them with sin and imperfection; but this was only on account of the wanderings and vain thoughts attending them, and not because I had no regard to God in them; for this I thought I had: but when I saw evidently that I had regard to nothing but self-interest, then they appeared vile mockery of God, self-worship, and a continual course of lies; so that I saw now, there was something worse had attended my duties than barely a few wanderings; for *the whole was nothing but self-worship and a horrid abuse of God.*

"I continued, as I remember in this state of mind, from Friday morning till the Sabbath evening following, July 12, 1739, when I was walking again in the same solitary place where I was brought to see myself lost and helpless, as was before mentioned; and here, in a mournful melancholy

state, was attempting to pray, but found no heart to engage in that or any other duty; my former concern and exercise, and religious affections were now gone. I thought the Spirit of God had quite left me; but still was not distressed, yet disconsolate, as if there was nothing in heaven or earth could make me happy.

"And having been thus endeavouring to pray, though being, as I thought, very stupid and senseless for near half an hour, and by this time the sun was about half an hour high, as I remember—then, as I was walking in a dark thick grove, *unspeakable glory seemed to open to the view and apprehension of my soul.* I do not mean any external brightness, for I saw no such thing; nor do I intend any imagination of a body of light, somewhere away in the third heavens, or anything of that nature; *it was a new inward apprehension or view that I had of God, such as I never had before, nor anything that had the least resemblance to it.* I stood still and wondered and admired; *I knew that I never had seen before anything comparable to it for excellency and beauty: it was widely different from all the conceptions that ever I had had of God or things Divine.* I had no particular apprehension of any one Person in the Trinity, either the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost; but *it appeared to be Divine glory that I then beheld; and my soul rejoiced with joy unspeakable, to see such a God, such a glorious Divine Being; and I was inwardly pleased and satisfied, that He should be God over all for ever and ever.* My soul was so captivated and delighted with the excellency, loveliness, greatness and other perfections of God, that I was even swallowed up in Him; at least to that degree, that I had no thought, as I remember, at first, about my own salvation, and scarce reflected there was such a creature as myself.

"Thus God, I trust, brought me to a hearty disposition to exalt Him, and set Him on the throne, and principally and ultimately to aim at His honour and glory, as King of the Universe.

"I continued in this inward state of joy and peace, yet astonishment, till near dark, without any sensible abatement, and then began to think and examine what I had seen, and felt sweetly composed in my mind all the evening following. *I felt myself* IN A NEW WORLD, *and everything about me appeared with a different aspect from what it was wont to do.*

"At this time, *the way of salvation opened to me with such infinite wisdom, suitableness, and excellency, that I wondered I should ever think of any other way of salvation; and was amazed that I had not dropped my own contrivances, and complied with this lovely, blessed, and excellent way before.* If I could have been saved by my own duties, or any other way that I had formerly contrived, my whole soul would now have refused. I wondered that all the world did not see and comply with *this way of salvation entirely by the Righteousness of Christ.*

"The sweet relish of what I then felt continued with me for several days, almost constantly, in a greater or less degree; I could not but sweetly rejoice in God, lying down and rising up."[1]

We thus see that Brainerd's experience, which is truly a very remarkable one, furnishes us with the most perfect illustration of the subject-matter in hand. Very few indeed of the Lord's children go through such lengthened convictions as he did, before they find peace; and fewer still are able to record their varied exercises so accurately: neither is it needful that they should; but the Lord had intended this precious soul for a very remarkable work; and it was, therefore, necessary that he should be specially fitted and prepared for it. We can see his mistakes—nay he has pointed them out himself with great clearness and perspicuity. Speaking theologically, we see, that having been "convinced of sin" by God, the Holy Ghost, under John xvi. 7-11, as "an unwise son," he "stayed long in the breaking forth of children,"[2] by looking for a righteousness in himself instead

[1] Life of the Rev. David Brainerd, pp. 5-19. [2] Hosea xiii. 13.

of in Christ Jesus, the Lord; vainly attempting, in consequence, to perfect and improve "the flesh," which is unchangeable and incurable, instead of "putting" it "off," as we are commanded to do in the Word[1]—not perceiving that we are not received for what *we* are, but for what *Christ* is—not for what we have done, or can do; for we have done, and can do, nothing but sin: but for what *He* has done, and suffered on our behalf. And the Lord permitted him to go down thus deep into his own nature's evil, that he might be experimentally taught these things, and so be the better able to instruct and teach others also. For the deeper the seal is cut, the deeper and clearer impression will it of course produce. It was thus that the Lord dealt with Luther, and with Bunyan and others, whom He had designed to accomplish some great and mighty work for His own glory and His people's good. For *all* the sufferings that such precious saints undergo, are not on their own account only, but for the benefit of other precious souls likewise. So Paul speaks, "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation."[2]

As, however, I have dealt with this subject more particularly in my First Vol. of "The Hidden Mystery"; I would now merely note, that the Lord's dealings with the souls of His people, are not only perfectly adapted for their own growth and establishment in Divine grace, but also for that special work which He has in His Providence appointed for them to do; and in His own due time He will reveal this to them, as we have seen that He did likewise to Brainerd himself.

Thus first, speaking generally, while studying God's promises respecting the future glory of His Church, Henry

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[1] Eph. iv. 22; Col. iii. 9. [2] 2 Cor. i. 5, 6.

Martyn, one of our first missionaries to India, says in his Journal, on the 6th of February, 1805, "I cannot imagine to myself, how things could be differently ordered, so as to be more for God's glory, or more delightful to my soul. The nature of His promises, and the language in which they are expressed, are all such as I should suppose worthy of God, and are certainly more agreeable to my mind, than I can think they would otherwise be."[1]

Secondly, speaking particularly, it is recorded of Dr. Payson,[2] when "a friend, with whom he had been conversing on his extreme bodily sufferings, and his high spiritual joys, remarked, 'I presume it is no longer credible to you, if ever it was, that martyrs should rejoice and praise God in the flames and on the rack?' 'No,' he said, 'I can easily believe it. I have suffered twenty times, yes, to speak within bounds, twenty times as much as I could in being burnt at the stake, while my joy in God so abounded, as to render my sufferings not only tolerable but welcome. The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed!'"[3] While on another occasion he said, "It seemed this afternoon as if Christ said to me, 'You have often wondered and been impatient at the way by which I have led you; *but what do you think of it now?*' And I was cut to the heart,—when I looked back and saw the wisdom and goodness by which I had been guided,—that I could ever for a moment distrust His love."[4] And so will it be in the end with all His loved ones: who like those mentioned in the Gospel (although in another sense,) will ultimately be "beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well."[5] For "as for God, His way is perfect: the word of Jehovah is tried; He is a buckler to all those that trust in Him."[6]

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[1] Journals and Letters of the Rev. Henry Martyn, p. 189.

[2] See the account of his glorious death-bed in my first vol. of "The Hidden Mystery," pp. 73-75.

[3] Memoir of the Rev. Edward Payson, D.D., p. 422.

[4] Ib., p. 416. [5] Mark vii. 37. [6] Psa. xviii. 30.

CHAPTER IX.

THE HURRICANE.

"And lo! on the wings of the heavy gales,
Through the boundless arch of heaven he sails:
Silent, and slow, and terribly strong,
The mighty shadow is borne along,
Like the dark eternity to come;
While the world below, dismay'd and dumb
Through the calm of the thick, hot atmosphere,
Looks up at its gloomy folds with fear.
They darken fast, and the golden blaze
Of the sun is quench'd in the lurid haze;
And he sends through the shade a funeral ray—
A glare that is neither night nor day—
A beam that touches with hues of death,
The clouds above and the earth beneath.
He is come! he is come! Do ye not behold
His ample robes on the wind unroll'd?
Giant of air, we bid thee hail!
How his grey skirts toss in the whirling gale!
How his huge and writhing arms are bent,
To clasp the zone of the firmament;
And fold at length in their dark embrace,
From mountain to mountain the visible space!
Darker still darker the whirlwinds bear
The dust of the plains to the middle air;
And hark to the crashing, long and loud,
Of the chariot of God in the thunder-cloud.
You may trace its path by the flashes that start
From the rapid wheels where'er they dart,
As the fire bolts leap to the world below,
And flood the sky with a lurid glow.
What a roar is that! 'Tis the rain that breaks
In torrents away from the airy lakes,
Heavily pour'd on the shuddering ground,
And shedding a nameless horror round.

Ah! well known woods, and mountains, and skies,
With the very clouds, ye are lost to my eyes.
I seek ye vainly, and see in your place
The shadowy tempest that sweeps through space—
A whirling ocean that fills the wall
Of the crystal heaven, and buries all;
And I, cut off from the world, remain
Alone with the terrible hurricane."

"Thou shalt be visited of Jehovah of Hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire."—ISA. xxix. 6.

"And Jehovah shall cause His glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of His arm, with the indignation of His anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones."—ISA. xxx. 30.

"Jehovah is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: Jehovah hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet."—NAHUM i. 3.

AND now I come to the third mode of God's dealings with this earth, which is exceptional, and ofttimes seems inscrutable to the sons of men; as are indeed His analogous dealings with the souls of His people; and which to many seem even much more so. Nevertheless, as He has given us examples of them in His Divine Word, as in the case of His "servant Job,"[1] wherein we may see, as the Apostle tells us, "the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy;"[2] we are bound to believe that equal wisdom and goodness might be discerned in all such cases, had we but eyes to behold them. And as I have hitherto adopted the plan of first describing God's dealings with the earth, and then passing on to contrast His analogous dealings with the souls of His people, I shall adhere to this method in this case likewise; only as I have never myself witnessed such an earthly phenomenon, I shall have to use the eyes of others; and I think I cannot do better

[1] Job i. 8.

[2] James v. 11. See the Writer's "Personality and History of Satan;" where Job's case is fully gone into and explained, pp. 165-187.

than give a description of that terrible hurricane which took place in the island of Antigua on the 21st of August, 1848, which was one of the most destructive that ever visited that island, from the pen of Captain Mackinnon, R.N., who was an eyewitness of it. He says:—

"Reader, were you ever in a West-Indian hurricane? If such has been your lot, I am sure you will agree with me in heartily and anxiously wishing never to behold one again; for though there is something strangely fascinating in scenes of terror, few desire to renew their acquaintance with them.

"The following description of an unusually severe elemental convulsion, is derived from notes taken while on a visit, in August, a few years ago,[1] to a friend at Dry-Hill House, in the vicinity of St. John's, the capital of Antigua. It is the faint record of a calamity which will be memorable in the annals of that unfortunate island.

"The inmates of my friend's mansion were one morning early astir, and actively employed in preparations for a marriage-feast. With the happy, careless air, peculiar to their race, negro women and children were bustling among the large and luxuriant foliage which, if it every now and then concealed them from view, could not stifle the sound of their rapid chattering, their giggling laughter, and snatches of songs, conveyed in the queer negro dialect. This irrepressible animation, reckless gaiety, and vivacious defiance of care, can hardly be imagined by the inhabitants of our northern climate. The merriment of negroes surpasses that of any other branch of the great human family.

"I also had risen early on this festive occasion, being unwilling to lose any portion of the hilarity which I knew would commence with the earliest light of morning. Never shall I forget the splendour with which the day broke—a splendour to be witnessed only in the tropics. The sun

[1] As the book, from which this account is taken, was published in the year 1852, the hurricane here referred to, was no doubt the one, which occurred on the 21st of August, 1848.

slowly rose from the glass-like sea, first glancing on a few clouds which had congregated, then

'Flattering the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,'

and gradually revealing the gorgeous colours of the vegetation. I gazed with rapture on the serene magnificence, and the language of the Psalmist was not unremembered: 'The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handy-work.'

"My ruminations, at this moment, were disturbed by one of the servants (a black girl), who brought me a cup of coffee and a cigar—the usual morning custom on a West-Indian plantation. It struck me that something uncommon, nay, even ominous, was observable in the expression of her countenance, and I waited, with no little curiosity, to hear what she had to communicate.

"'Hy, massa,' said she, 'here de coffee. How do you do dis morning?' Then, with a significant glance, she added, 'Ole Massa, he say will my ung massa look at 'rometer?'

"'Thank you, Nancy,' I replied, 'it will be time enough to inspect the weather-glass when I have finished my coffee. How are *you*, Nancy?'

"'So-so, rader poorly, tank God, massa,' rejoined the girl as, with a sigh, she left me.

"'Very mysterious,' thought I, 'is this message about the barometer with my morning coffee. It never occurred before during my visit here. Something strange must be in the weather. Let me see if I can find it out.'

"I accordingly looked carefully round at all points of the compass; but nothing extraordinary was perceptible, excepting that a dull haze crept languidly over the scene, and that the silence was awful.

"In a few minutes, having finished my cigar, I went into my friend's bed-room. Though generally an early riser, he was, on this occasion, still in bed.

"'Hallo!' exclaimed I, 'why are you still there? Up, man, up, and set to work: you have plenty to do this day.'

"'Heaven grant,' responded he, 'that I may not have *too* much to do before a few hours are past! There's a hurricane in the air—I am sure of it.'

"'Stuff and nonsense,' I rejoined. 'The barometer stands firmly at 30°; it has rather gone up since yesterday.'

"'My dear boy,' returned he emphatically, 'I have been thirty years a resident in the West Indies. During that time I have witnessed eight hurricanes. The last three were foreshadowed by my own sensations. These sensations are now aggravated tenfold. A terrible day is before us.'

"That forebodings like those under which my friend then suffered, are unerring, I have since that time ascertained. They are produced by two causes, namely, physical derangement, and observation of meteorological peculiarities. In his Treatise on European Colonies, Mr. Howison observes, 'Persons long resident in the West Indian Islands are able to foretell the approach of hurricanes with tolerable accuracy, by the observation of certain atmospherical phenomena; but this kind of knowledge proves, unfortunately, of little avail, either on shore or at sea; the violence of the tempest generally rendering impotent all precautions that may be employed against its destructive effects. On the day preceding the hurricane, the weather is almost always calm and sultry, and the sea breeze does not set in at the usual hour, or, perhaps, is not felt at all, the sky is red and hazy, and the horizon surcharged with clouds; the noise of the surf seems particularly loud and distinct; and thunder, more or less distant, is heard incessantly. At length, the wind begins to blow in shifting gusts, and to lull again; these increase in strength and frequency, and ere long the blast comes roaring from one quarter with concentrated fury.' This, no doubt, is generally correct; but it does not precisely describe the morning witnessed by me.

"As I perceived my friend to be really in earnest, and that he was suffering greatly under his apprehensions, I gave in to his humour, and promised to note accurately the appearances of the weather and the movements of the mercury in the barometer.

"This assurance seemed a little to relieve him.

"'I shall leave all preparations and precautions to you,' said he. 'I am quite unnerved, as is always the case when these fearful tempests are brooding in the air. The tornado will be upon us within twenty-four hours.'

"It cannot be supposed that a young man who, for five years previously, had been knocking about in all parts of the world in small vessels, could sympathize with the climate-worn and sensitive planter. I, therefore, left the bedroom in excellent spirits; not only without apprehension, but actually longing for the hurricane to arrive, as excellent fun; so rash and thoughtless is youth.

"Outside the house I met Betsy, the staid black housekeeper, feeding the poultry.

"'Well, Betsy,' said I, 'Massa say hurricane come to-day.'

"Never did a few words produce such a change in the person who heard them. The woman's gabble to the cocks and hens ceased suddenly. A grave, disconcerted look supplanted the good-humoured smile which had played about her thick lips. I might almost say she turned *pale;* and the measure of corn fell from her hands. It was evident that until now she had heard nothing of her master's prognostications.

"'Oh ky, ky!' sobbed she. 'Massa always right.' And off she ran in violent perturbation.

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"In a few minutes the whole household was in violent commotion. Messengers were instantly dispatched to the sugar works (about half-a-mile inland), and also to the cove, where an establishment of small vessels was kept for various purposes, such as sugar-droghing, collecting coral to burn into lime, &c. Meantime the table in the dining-room was removed, disclosing a huge trap-door leading down to a spacious cellar. Into this chasm, contrived as a place of refuge during hurricanes, the scared nigger-kind conveyed all the most portable articles of value.

"By nine o'clock, all needful preparations were completed, and a hurried breakfast was snatched. The barometer

certainly had a downward tendency, having fallen ·03°, but there was no other perceptible indication of a change. A light air from E.N.E. had now set in—the usual trade-wind; but all was placid and beautiful as before. In the yard grew a magnificent tamarind tree, loaded with nearly ripe fruit. The pods hung in large and tempting clusters; and the foliage, gently agitated by the breeze, gracefully waved to and fro.

"The domestic animals were evidently disturbed: their manner was hurried and uneasy. They clearly had a knowledge of impending evil.

"Not being so sceptical as to disbelieve these signs, slight as they were, I kept all my senses on the alert, watching alternately the mercury in the barometer, and the signs of the weather. By eleven o'clock, a more decided fall in the glass was evident; it had gone down to 29·80°. To the northward the horizon had darkened considerably. The trade-wind, however, still swept gently and refreshingly over us; but at two p.m. it died away, and then the mercury fell considerably.

"All doubt about the approaching tempest was now dispelled. The black inhabitants of the small cottages in the vicinity, belonging to the estate, flocked up to Dry-Hill House, to seek consolation from companionship with the white people.

"A light breeze soon sprang up from the north, and as it rose, the mercury fell. At three o'clock a furious gale was raging. Being anxious to observe the proceedings of the shipping, I slipped out of the back part of the house, and went down towards a cliff overlooking the anchorage. To my great disgust as a sailor, I perceived amongst the twelve merchant-vessels, lying in the roads, that only four were making any preparations to withstand the typhoon.

. . . . . .

"As the wind still steadily increased, I considered it best to get back to the shelter of the house. To enable me to do this conveniently, it was necessary I should creep along

under the garden bank, which offered some protection against the gale. Not having the slightest idea that the force of the wind would be so enormous in this early stage of the hurricane, I attempted to walk past a gateway, and being instantly struck by the full power of the blast, was rolled over, and driven, as by a giant's strength, violently along the ground. For a moment I gave up myself for lost, as the harbour of St. John was directly in my compelled course. Fortunately before coming to the open water, the land declined into a bushy marsh. Here, assisted by the underwood, I clung firmly to Mother Earth.

"After resting awhile and collecting my thoughts, I succeeded, by taking advantage of the nature of the ground, which sheltered me in some measure from the wind, in regaining the yard of Dry-Hill House. The stunning roar of the blast continued, and the noble tamarind-tree writhing, seemingly, in agony, was grinding its huge limbs, whipping off large branches, and throwing them and the fruit violently about, as if by this oblation it hoped to appease the demon of the gale. Alas! the sacrifice appeared only to incense and provoke its rage.

"I entered the mansion, and sat down to regain my breath. It now became necessary to close and barricade every door in the house, and nail the windows firmly down. A crowd of women and children were huddled together on the floor in silence. Conversation was impossible, on account of the furious noise.

"My imagination had been very much excited by the dismemberment of my favourite tamarind. The idea of its apparent torture held me in thrall. Through a crevice in one of the shutters, I painfully watched its throes. Its main branches (the growth of a hundred years) wrestled obstinately with the opposing force: their groaning was heard above the mighty wind; and soon nothing was left but a few jagged stumps on the blackened trunk.

"Darkness now closed upon us. The violence of the tempest waxed stronger and stronger: the noise increased

to such an overwhelming roar, that the strongest efforts of the human voice, in closest proximity, became totally useless: they were 'as a whisper in the ears of death, unheard.' Loud cracks now gave notice that the house began to complain. The women and children were immediately roused from their sitting position, and, by signs, desired to go below. This movement was speedily effected, and the ground floor was left in possession of the manager and myself. Our attention was now divided between the barometer, which fortunately hung near the open trap-door (our last retreat) and the perilous vibration of the building. The walls appeared to bend and give before the raging blast.

"Suddenly, a violent shock was felt, sending a thrill to our hearts. This was afterwards ascertained to be caused by the demolition of the kitchen, stables, and outhouses adjoining the dwelling, which, with all their contents, had flown away on the wings of the wind. Not a vestige was ever recovered or seen. Numerous smaller shocks succeeded, like reports of cannon. Huge stones were hurled through the air, battering and tearing away the verandahs that surrounded the house.

"To crown our dismay, a large spout of heavy wood, intended to convey the cane juice from the mill to the boiling house of a neighbouring estate, two miles to the northward, came, spear-like, through the air, penetrating the roof, piercing the table, and fixing itself into the floor close to us. The part which projected above the roof caught the gale, and acted as a powerful lever, shaking the house as if it were pasteboard. In a moment more it parted, leaving the lower portion still fixed.

"At this time the barometer had fallen to 28·50. We felt, or fancied we felt, the house giving way. Taking a farewell look at our faithful monitor, we prepared to descend into the cellar. To my intense astonishment, the mercury suddenly fell a quarter of an inch. In the excitement of the moment, I seized hold of the manager, roaring the information in his ear; but as before, the human voice was of no avail in such a turmoil. By dumb show I succeeded.

"On a sudden, we were aware of a marvellous change in the state of things.

"'Great Heaven!' I ejaculated, 'what can this mean?'

"There was a dead calm—a profound silence, disturbed only by the low, wailing sobs and incoherent prayers of the women and children in the cellar. *We were in the vortex of the hurricane!* It is impossible to describe the horror of this period. A door was unbarred and opened, and, with a lighted candle, I stepped out. The flame took its upward course steadily. All round was black, and calm, and silent.[1]

"But the stillness was of brief duration. In a short time, a distant rumbling noise was heard, when I quickly re-entered the house, drawing bolt and bar. A slight tremor shook the ground; an earthquake was added to our ills. Again came the hurricane from the opposite quarter, overwhelming our senses with its fierce impetuosity. The house, already shaken, now rocked to and fro threatening instant destruction. We immediately descended into the cellar, fastening down the trap-door with a strong lashing. During several dreary hours we remained in suspense, stunned by the hellish disturbance overhead, while our feelings were occasionally varied by the horrible and sickening sensation

[1] This is one of the usual concomitants of such hurricanes, which move in gyrations. This was noticed in the recent fearful hurricane in the Mauritius, on the 29th of April, 1892, and deceived several persons on that occasion; for the Mayor of Port Louis, in his letter to the Lord Mayor of London, of the 12th of May following, says, "Shortly after, at about noon, all traffic had to be suspended, owing to the violence of the wind and the torrents of rain which poured down, and went on increasing till about 3 p.m. At this moment the damage caused by the hurricane was serious enough; but *a complete lull having followed the boisterous squalls of winds which blew, everyone thought the cyclone was over* Such was not, however, the case. *The sudden calm was but the indication that the centre of the cyclone was passing over the island.* The barometer at that moment had fallen as low as 29·96 inches. Suddenly, at about 3 p.m., a terrific hurricane succeeded the lull before alluded to. Frightful whirlwinds poured down on the centre of the town without interruption, sweeping everything away in their passage, breaking down trees, blowing down houses and public buildings, and burying under their ruins thousands of people belonging to all classes of the community. Such a scene of horror and havoc cannot possibly be described."

of the earthquake. Some bottles were thrown down by the agitation of the ground, and the long rows of rum-casks grotesquely heaved, as if instinct with life, and tottered and fell in the most approved style of German demon-pranks.

"At 4 a.m. there was a sensible diminution of the gale. We proceeded carefully to unfasten the trap-door. On its falling back, *the moon was plainly visible*, throwing light on groups of dense, black clouds driving furiously across the heavens. Nothing was above us but the sky! The upper part of the house was gone!

"My friend proceeded with me to a rising ground, waiting in anxious expectation for daylight. His agitation was extreme. Dawn was in the East.

"'Look towards the mill,' he said, '*I* cannot do it. It must be gone. Nothing could withstand such a night. I am a ruined man.'

"My eyes were strained anxiously in the direction of the mill. At length I exclaimed:

"'Cheer up: the work stands firm and strong. All yonder seems to be right.'

"The sun now appeared with the serenity which marked its rise on the preceding day; but the scene of devastation that met our eyes baffles all power of description. *Had a hot blast from hell passed over the whole island, the effect could not have been more destructive. Vegetation, human habitations, animal life, all had vanished.*

"On our return to the house, we passed through what had been a group of lofty cocoa-nut trees, of which nothing remained but stumps, standing only a few feet from the earth. The huge tops, foliage, fruit, and remainder of the trunk were gone. A solid stone wall, two feet high, surmounted by iron railings, had surrounded the house. This, railings and all, were blown away in masses; some of two hundred weight were afterwards found a mile off.

"The previous day we were in the midst of plenty and luxury, now we were glad to banquet on a decayed ham luckily found in the cellar.

"Reports soon came in from the different parts of the property. We understood that the cove-house was blown down, and that all the small vessels were driven high and dry far above high-water mark into the jungle on Rat Island. The Overseer of the works, a black, reported all destroyed except the boiling-house, which, however, had sustained serious injury. Its steam-engine chimney was blown down, and the earthquake had made a rent in its wall.

. . . . . .

"The natural anxiety of a sailor again led me down to view the shipping. Never did I behold such a scene of wreck! Two of the largest craft had foundered with all hands; the lower mast-heads still sticking above the water. The small vessels, as already stated, I found a long way above high-water mark. Three had ridden out the storm, and amongst them, to my surprise, the brig. There she lay, still at single anchor, the main royal-yard still crossed, but the fore-top-mast-head twisted off, and all the upper gear gone. Who can account for this?

"The poor steamer to which I was attached in English Harbour had fared very badly. In the first part of the gale she had dragged the huge moorings, and gone broadside on to the wharf. On the gale shifting, not being able to snap the numerous fastenings by which she was secured to the buried guns, she had torn down the whole length of the wharf whereto she was attached, and dragged huge masses of débris into the harbour. Several ponderous stone buildings in the dockyard were blown down, and a Dutch corvette, strongly secured in English Harbour, was driven up into six feet water; her usual draught being seventeen feet."[1]

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[1] From "Atlantic and Transatlantic Sketches, Afloat and Ashore." By Captain Mackinnon, R.N., Vol. ii., pp. 37-58. The writer adds:—"It may, perhaps, be consoling to our lady-readers to be informed that the wedding, to which allusion is made at the commencement of this narrative, took place a few days after, as soon as the roads could be cleared of the numerous and heavy masses of wreck, blown on them by this fearful hurricane."

CHAPTER X.

THE HURRICANE—continued.

"When the clouds have hid His face,
And His path no more I trace,
And all comforts that illume
Life, have faded into gloom;—
Quench'd its earth-enkindled spark—
Can I trust Him in the dark?
Will my wavering faith still hold
To a promise breathed of old?
When I meet some foe unknown,
Shall I find myself alone?
Soul, by faith thou walkest here:
Though no sun nor stars appear,
Wait and watch throughout the night,
And till daybreak ask not sight:
All unseen, thy Heavenly Guide
Walks, through darkness at thy side.
'Heaven and earth shall pass away,
Not My Word'—so Christ doth say:
In the gloom His truth shall be
Shield and buckler unto thee."

"Tremble not, though darkly gather
Clouds and tempests o'er thy sky,
Still believe, thy Heavenly Father
Loves thee best when storms are nigh.

. . . . .

"For the Lord, on high presiding,
Rules the storm with powerful hand;
He the showers of grace is guiding
To the dry and barren land.

"See at length the clouds are breaking,
Tempests have not pass'd in vain;
For the soul, revived, awakening,
Bears its fruits and flowers again.

"Love Divine has seen and counted
Every tear it caused to fall,
And the storm which Love appointed
Was its choicest gift of all."

"I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of His wrath. He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light. Surely against me is He turned; He turneth His hand against me all the day." "He hath set me in dark places as they that be dead of old." "Also when I cry and shout, He shutteth out my prayer." "And Thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I forgat prosperity. And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from Jehovah: remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall."—LAM. iii. 1-3, 6, 8, 17-19.

"Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness in the deeps. Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and Thou hast afflicted me with all Thy waves." "Jehovah, why castest Thou off my soul? why hidest Thou Thy face from me? I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer Thy terrors I am distracted. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me: Thy terrors have cut me off."—PSA. lxxxviii. 6, 7, 14-16.

I STATED in my last Chapter, that the only instance recorded in the Scriptures of what might not be unaptly called *a Spiritual Hurricane*, is that which occurred to the patriarch Job: where we see Jehovah, as Job himself expresses it, "lifting" him "up to the wind;"[1] and permitting "the prince of the power of the air,"[1] to bring down upon him, with a suddenness and a fury, which Satan vainly hoped might prove irresistible, the full force of his "windy storm and tempest."[3] "I was at ease," says Job, "but He hath broken me asunder: He hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces." "He breaketh me with breach upon breach; He runneth upon me like a giant."[4] "*He breaketh me with a tempest*, and multiplieth my wounds without cause. He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness."[5] "Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together! For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea; therefore my words are swallowed up. For the arrows

[1] Job xxx. 22. [2] Eph. ii. 2. [3] Psa. lv. 8.
[4] Job xvi. 12, 14. [5] Job ix. 17, 18.

of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me."[1] "When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint; then Thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions; so that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life."[2] And then referring to the Evil One, he says, "He teareth me in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnasheth upon me with his teeth; mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me."[3]

Nevertheless, as we have no *detailed* account of Job's sufferings, I shall here give the only account of a like nature, that I ever heard or read of: which being compared with the account of the *literal* hurricane given in my last Chapter, might almost be said to be *the spiritual counterpart of it.* I shall give the account in the sufferer's own words: who vouches for the truth of it, even down to the minutest particular.

He says:—"I was brought to the knowledge of the truth many years ago, by the Lord Himself, apart from any human instrumentality whatever. After groaning under deep conviction of sin for many months, I was at length brought to the conviction that I was 'lost,' and could do nothing whatever to help or save myself; and, then, while in spirit looking up to the Lord with the heart-thought of, 'Then, Lord, you must do just what you please with me,' in an instant a bright light shot down into my spirit; and my mouth was at once opened 'to show forth His praise.' Thus did I pass 'from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God;'[4] and for several months my 'time' was now 'the time of love';[5] and 'the Song of Solomon' was then, above all other portions of Scripture, 'the rejoicing of my heart.'[6] At that time I knew no other Christian, and being extremely reserved by nature, I never for a moment thought of revealing my feelings to others. I was, moreover, very ignorant of spiritual things, and knew next to nothing

[1] Job vi. 2-4. [2] Job vii. 13-15. [3] Job xvi. 9.
[4] Acts xxvi. 18. [5] Ezek. xvi. 8. [6] Psa. cxix. 111.

of my own heart. The Lord now, therefore, began to let me see something of it, and I drew back from the sight with horror; and imagined that He had forsaken me, and I gave myself up for lost again and again. I now saw that by nature I was in God's sight filthier than the filthiest toad; and I could not conceive how He could possibly love me: for I hated even the sight of myself: and I imagined that everybody else could see it as well. Then Satan, who had long been watching and waiting for his opportunity, and who had been for some time, without my having been in the least degree aware of it, puffing me up with spiritual pride, came roaring in upon my heart with hellish blasphemies, telling me that I had committed the unpardonable sin. For several months this dreadful contest continued, Satan assaulting my poor soul daily with his 'fiery darts,' and I seemingly having no 'shield of faith'[1] to ward them off; but crying out unto God in an agony of supplication, 'I am Thine, save me.'[2] But when, in spite of all my struggling and crying, 'there was no voice, nor any that answered,'[3] and Satan had vehemently assailed me for a long period with fearful and pressing temptations to sin, on one occasion I seemed suddenly to yield, though it was but in thought; and I ultimately fell, and backslided from my God. Now I thought I really *had* committed the unpardonable sin; and for one year I remained in this awful state of misery and degradation; accounting myself the most execrable creature in the universe. From this state the Lord graciously restored me, again apart from all human instrumentality by nothing less than a miracle—shortly afterwards, however, delivering me 'unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus':[4] during which period, I often retired from the conflict with the adversary, as Luther said of himself on a like occasion, 'torn, wounded, bloody.' These dreadful conflicts lasted for several years; but as my faith was now much stronger,

[1] Eph. vi. 16. [2] Psa. cxix. 94. [3] 1 Kings xviii. 26. [4] 1 Cor. v. 5.

I could endure them better. But truly I learnt war in my youth. And then the Lord began to use me in His service, sending me at first to desperate cases—giving me many, many precious souls, and enabling me to 'build up' many believers 'in their most holy faith.'[1]

"I naturally thought, therefore, that I 'knew the depths of Satan;'[2] and that I was 'not ignorant of his devices:'[3] but I was mistaken: for I afterwards found out that 'a spiritual hurricane' as far exceeds the ordinary furious assaults of Satan upon the soul; as a violent thunderstorm falls short of the terrific fury of a typhoon in the Chinese seas, or a tornado over the island of Mauritius!

"This spiritual hurricane, which happened at least thirty years after my conversion, came upon me, as it did upon poor Job, suddenly and unexpectedly. Some time before this, the Lord, having previously thrust me out to preach the Gospel, had given me some most blessed tokens of His favour in the conversion of several precious souls, and in the marvellous and wonderful restoration of a backslider, whom I had had the privilege of bringing to the knowledge of the truth several years before: so that I was quite unprepared for any such awful visitation as afterwards came upon me.

"For some time before the full blast of the hurricane struck me, there was a fearful fall in my spiritual barometer; so that I might, and perhaps ought to, have known that something terrible was about to happen. Moreover the Lord had evidently, as I now see, given me some kind of warning by bringing before me, as it then seemed to me casually, certain passages of Scripture, as well as extracts from the writings of others, bearing upon the subject of fierce assaults from the Adversary.[4] Moreover I had about

[1] Jude 20. [2] Rev. ii. 24. [3] 2 Cor. ii. 11.

[4] The following was one of them, taken from the Life of the Rev. W. H. Krause. "But the Lord was now about to place him in the furnace of affliction, and so prepare him for future service. It is there He fashions the instruments He designs to use; and the more effective the instrument is designed to be, the more intense the fiery process through which it is made to pass."—Life, p. 10.

this time the most tremendous conflicts with the Evil One, to get again into the heavenlies in Christ, and He to keep me out of them.[1] But I seemed to go down deeper and deeper, until my poor heart was broken to pieces, and I felt as if I should burst, if I could not get nearer to Christ. This was succeeded by an awful view of the Law, and I could not keep guilt out of my conscience, and was fearfully torn and wounded. Then I saw that I had been endeavouring to reason out with Satan that I was a child of God, instead of going at once to Jesus, and asking Him to answer him for me. But plead as I would, and agonise in prayer as I might, my spiritual barometer only went down lower and lower; and I was awfully cast down, after visiting a poor young woman, who was dying of decline, when I found that all my words and prayers, which had so often before been so wondrously blessed to others in like cases, were now utterly powerless; and my heart-anguish on her behalf was intense.

"This case fearfully distressed me, not only on the poor woman's account, but also on my own: for I saw that my spiritual power had gone! And now Satan opened out upon my soul a perfect blast furnace from hell: but little did I then think that I should afterwards have to be put into it. Nevertheless I was still enabled to 'look up' unto God; although in feeling I seemed slung out from His presence, and as if I were in hell itself. Still I believe even then that the Lord sent a word or two into my heart, to keep me from absolutely giving way to despair: for I remember on one occasion, while I was thinking, 'Is this then an answer to my oft-repeated prayer for the utter destruction of the flesh, and for the life of the spirit in all its power? But where, then, *is* the life of the spirit?' when there instantly dropped into my mind these words, 'By these things men live, and in all *these* things is the life of my spirit:' which seemed so opportune, that I could not but think that the Lord had sent it; and afterwards referring to the passage itself, Isaiah xxxviii. 9-20, I found it even more so. Yet still the dread-

[1] Eph. vi. 11-18, compared with ii. 6.

ful Satanic pressure, and the awful desolation of my spirit continued, nay even increased in intensity. My heart also now began to feel fearfully pained, and so dreadfully oppressed, that it seemed at times as if it would burst; and I could not tell whether it were bodily or spiritual.

"And now the full force of the blast came down upon me: for while I had at times a dreadful heart-hunger after God, and the most longing intensity of spirit to get near to Christ: I had the most awful view of the depravity of my natural heart, and my dreadful inconformity to God's image and likeness; and the Satanic pressure upon my spirit seemed utterly unendurable; while Satan taunted me in the most dreadful manner — telling me, 'Now you *know* what a reprobate is!' 'Jesus of Nazareth *has* passed by!' &c., &c.: while he presented to my mind, with the most marvellous distinctness, the most fearful images—one which seemed to be a particular favourite with him, being a vision of a coffin set up on end, with my name upon it, and the date of my death, some day in the month of October following! And now came what I never before could have conceived that Satan would ever have been granted the power of doing, *i.e.*, of *inflicting soul-torture upon a child of God!* It is impossible for me to describe what I then suffered. The agony I endured was dreadful beyond measure; and I thought I could not possibly endure it for an hour: but I *had* to endure it, more or less, for months. I was now put *into* the blast furnace, and the mouth of it covered over upon me! No description could better set it forth than this! And now Satan began to pour into my mind perfect floods of the most awful and horrible doubts of God's goodness, love and mercy—representing Him as the most horrible and cruel of tyrants! Dr. Payson, in speaking of such things, says, 'But oh! the temptations, which have harassed me for the last three months! I have met with nothing like them in books. I dare not mention them to any mortal, lest they should trouble him, as they have troubled me.' 'All the atheistical, deistical, and heretical objections, which

I meet with in books, are childish babblings, compared with those which Satan suggests, and which he urges upon the mind with a force which seems irresistible.'[1] 'This testimony is true;' and I shall not, therefore, detail any of the awful temptations and doubts with which Satan now assailed my poor soul; but as I still clung unto God, and would not give up my trust in Him; I will mention one of them. Some time before, I had been reading an account of a Vivisectionist torturing a poor dog in the Lecture Room, before a number of students; and when, after a slight pause, he turned to them to explain the effect of the laying bare of some nerve or other, the poor dog feebly licked his hand—yet the cruel wretch, unmoved, still continued his diabolical experiments and his Lecture, as if nothing particular had taken place! 'Now,' said Satan, 'this is just *your case!* you are in *God's torture chamber;* and He is just experimenting upon you for the benefit of others! And'—I will not, however, sully my pages by uttering a word of the daring, hellish blasphemies that he poured into my soul against my God after this; but my whole soul rose up against them, and I said 'I *will* trust Him still!' But oh! the added agony in my then tortured condition to my poor distressed heart!

"Nevertheless the hurricane continued, nay increased in intensity; and the 'building' of 'God'[2] within me, seemed now to crack and give awful signs of being about to be swept away altogether. Never shall I forget *this* awful period. Now I seemed, even while my soul agony was not in the least degree abated, as if I stood spiritually naked in the presence of a holy God; and had no robe of Righteousness of Jehovah Jesus to cover me; while Satan plied me with awful temptations, and said, 'You can see now, I think, pretty plainly what you are; and may know from your own feelings, that God has for ever cast you off, and that you are nothing but a reprobate!' Nevertheless I still cried out

[1] "Memoir of the Rev. Edward Payson, D.D.," pp. 382, 383.
[2] 1 Cor. iii. 9.

in my heart to God, and cast myself upon His Sovereign mercy in Christ Jesus. I think I got a slight respite for a very short time: but the fury of the blast still continued, if it did not increase. Certainly the Satanic pressure did; with the added temptation that I had committed the unpardonable sin. And now such a combination of other trials of business and family matters, were heaped up upon me in addition, and my heart pain again came upon me at the same time with such force, that I felt as if I were upon the verge of a precipice, and that another step would cast me over it: for spirit, soul, body and affairs seemed gone, and God with them: and if ever a poor creature's heart was as near broken as could be, mine certainly was on that occasion. I made a superhuman effort to recover myself, God being merciful to me, and the crisis passed: but death was certainly very near me at that moment.

"Still the hurricane continued; and now I left home, in the vain endeavour to find rest elsewhere, as well as to re-invigorate my wearied body, which had of course greatly suffered in consequence of my soul anguish: but there was no rest for my agonized spirit as yet. I was in awful soul anguish as I left, and hardly ever expected to be brought home again alive. I read the Epistle of the Romans through in the train, and was in prayer nearly the whole way up to London; and I made a mighty soul effort under Rom. xi. 33 to hang by faith on God, as a God of wonders, for near two hours: but I was literally in hell as I drove through the city in a cab to the hotel. For the next few days my dreadful agony was perfectly indescribable; and how I possibly bore up under it, I cannot tell. I went to hear a celebrated preacher; and how I got there I wondered: for I thought I should have died on the way. I tried to divert my mind by a visit to the Zoological Gardens: but when I got there, I was in such awful agony, that I could not even bear to look at anything; and I sat on a seat by myself in the shade for a long while till I could get back again. Then on the Lord's Day following I went again to

hear another celebrated preacher. His text was, 'Take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people.' I saw all in my mind as clear as a sunbeam; but was unutterably powerless in myself. It seemed to me as if this must be the very feeling of the finally-cast off ones: and *I* seemed to be the very one! Again, I went to hear another celebrated preacher, who discoursed upon the enemies of Jehovah: and when he wound up with Sisera, with a nail in each temple, and quoted the text, 'So let all Thine enemies perish, O Jehovah!' it seemed as if a voice said, 'Thou art the man!' and I felt doomed to destruction, and that it was only a question of time when execution would take place.

"It was in vain that I crawled about from place to place, or attempted to look at any work of art, in which I had formerly so delighted—the same soul anguish was always upon me. In Westminster Abbey my agony of soul was indescribable; and when I attempted to look at the pictures in the National Gallery, such an awful soul-sickness came over me, that I *could* not do it. Then I saw the full meaning of that text, 'I will make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate because of thy sins.'[1] But oh! the soul-desolation and anguish when I passed places of worship, and felt in spirit as if they could never more be God's houses *unto me!* Now I seemed to realise what the damned must feel, when it will be all over with them for ever! For when I got to the Isle of Wight, which was my final destination, very early on, while in the back road to the house where I was staying, I was seized with the most horrible impression that it was all over with me for ever; that I had committed the unpardonable sin; and that God had cast me off to all eternity.

"I had gone awfully deep down in soul misery before: but now I was to go down deeper still, and to see a sight that I had never *fully* seen before, *i.e.*, that my *natural* heart (and I *then* thought that I had *no other:* for it seemed

[1] Micah vi. 13.

impossible to me that *I* could have been 'born of God,') was nothing more nor less than a transcript of the *devil's* heart. And oh! that sight was dreadful beyond description! and I stood transfixed with horror! 'What!' thought I: 'has it come to this? After all that the Lord has done by me, after having taught others, more or less, for 30 years, after having publicly preached the Gospel for the last 10 years, after having been the means of converting many souls, and leading many more believers into full light and liberty in Christ Jesus, has it come to this, that I am *myself* to be "a castaway?"—that I am *myself* "a reprobate" after all?' Oh! the horror of those days! But they were to be continued, more or less, for another seven months longer! And now I seemed like a poor fly in a huge hideous spider's web, with all escape seemingly utterly cut off from it for ever! And oh! what an awful fear of Satan came upon my spirit now! for he did not scruple to reveal himself to me; and with frightful distinctness! Now I saw what fearful power he has, and how eagerly he exercises it, when God permits! and I must sorrowfully confess, that my heart then cowed before him; and this he tried to make me believe (and I fear I thought so at the time) was the most convincing proof that I really *had* committed the unpardonable sin. And now he actually tried to force me to pray to him, and to worship him: but, thank God! he never succeeded in doing this!

"And oh! with what awful power and cunning subtlety did he now work! One day he would pour into my mind such a flood of filthy, horrible and blasphemous temptations, that it seemed *to sense*, as if I must lie down in such filth to all eternity, and could never by possibility be pure again! At another time he would present the most dreadfully specious arguments about God's dealings with me, with himself, and with others, with a view of striving to induce me, not only to think that God was cruel and unjust, but actually to pity even the devil himself, and thence to sympathise with him in his opposition to the Christ of God; and the way in which I saw my natural heart at times chiming in,

paratively speaking, might be likened unto the hairs of my head, swelled out into awful bulk, like gigantic oaks. Now I ventured again to open out my case to several of the Lord's dear children in Christ Jesus: but none of them were allowed to comfort me: for although everyone of them fully believed that I was really a child of God, and was only under dreadful temptations, and they all said that they had access to God on my behalf; yet I thought they would not have said so, had they known all: and as to their having access to God on my behalf, I thought that God had not *yet told* them that He had cast me off; and I only dreaded every time I afterwards mentioned the subject to them, to hear them say, 'We have *now* access to God on your behalf *no longer*'! And here I cannot but mention, 'to the praise of the glory of the Lord's grace,' what I now see to be true, that the 'babes in Christ' were those to whom I was the most indebted for the little spark of hope, that still lay among the smouldering embers at the very bottom of my poor dark heart. For when I was in the light, I always had a tender love to 'the babes in Christ,' and I made it a great point to watch over them, to tend them, and to 'bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' And now these dear babes were chosen of the Lord to return this kindness into my own bosom.

"But I must hasten onwards, for to give a more detailed account of this awful visitation would fill a volume. Suffice it, then, to say, that after some months spent in this dreadful manner, one evening as I lay exhausted upon the sofa, a message came from a poor woman, whom I used to visit in days gone by, earnestly entreating me to come and see her, as she was upon her death-bed. Instantly the thought came into my mind, 'How is it possible for me to go under such circumstances!' But the thought was as quickly put on one side by the Divine Spirit, *Who authoritatively commanded me to go;* and on my complying with His motions, the thick black cloud was removed from my mind at once, and the Satanic pressure upon my spirit completely taken

from off it; and when I got there, my mouth was actually opened to speak of Jesus and His finished work; and I concluded with an earnest beseeching prayer to God *on her behalf*, which was *answered*, and made a blessing to her. I was astonished at this beyond measure; and wondered: for I believe I was then, as it were, *spiritually in the very vortex of the hurricane!* But while thus musing upon the marvellous circumstance, and endeavouring to get access to God again, *on my own behalf*, Satan with great subtlety suggested that the reason God had sent for me, was because He had used me before in blessing to this poor woman's soul; for *she* was one of the Lord's children; but that it was for *her* sake, not for *mine;* and that He had made use of me as a reprobate, that my condemnation might only be the heavier!' This threw me into an awful quandary: and then in an instant the Satanic pressure came upon me worse than ever, and the hurricane began to blow from exactly the opposite quarter.[1] For hitherto, in consequence of the dreadful torments I had suffered, sin seemed as if it were dead; but now, in addition to the hellish torture of my spirit, the flesh started up with fearful energy, and Satan seemed to have the power of stirring it up in a most marvellous manner. This was a thousand times worse to bear: for now the 'building of God' within me seemed swept away altogether; and I lay a crushed and battered thing, feeling in spirit as if I were accursed both of God and man. Neverthe-

[1] There can be no doubt that this was the case also with the patriarch Job; for in the first instance the fury of the Satanic blast was directed against him *God-ward*, i.e, with the object of shaking his trust in God: but in this the Evil One did not succeed; for this only manifested his trust to be a genuine one: and "in all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" (Job i. 22). But after the fury of the blast had blown upon him in this quarter unremittingly for at least "seven days and seven nights" (Job ii. 13), it suddenly veered round to the opposite quarter; the subtle adversary now directing it against him *man-ward*, i.e., by attacking his "flesh," or "old man," through the false accusations of his so-called "friends:" and *then* poor Job was driven to open his mouth, and not only to "sin with his lips," but also to "charge God foolishly!"—so subtle and malignant is the great adversary of our souls!

less my 'life was' still 'hid with Christ in God;' although I then knew it not: for to sense I seemed to myself to be lying beneath the ruins of my own nature. The very resistance to these awful temptations might, however, have shown me where I was, had I had eyes to see: for although I had one heart that fell in with the temptations, I had another that loathed and resisted them as well. These temptations were continued without intermission for months; until in one unguarded moment, Satan induced me to look at an inflaming object; and then it seemed as if an awful shock passed through my spirit, which I feel utterly unable to describe: but it opened out to my view the greatness of the human soul, and its vast capacity either for happiness or for misery. Oh! how I now loathed myself for my sin, and groaned in spirit that I had thus yielded to the adversary: for Satan now rushed like lightning into the breach, and for a while seemed to 'lead me captive,' *to some extent at least*, 'at his will:' although he never did succeed in forcing me to dishonour the Lord openly, which he strove with mighty power to accomplish, or even to force me to murmur, or complain of the Lord's dealings with me; for I felt too black a hellion for that; which ought to have convinced me that I could not possibly be a reprobate: for no 'natural man' could ever have had any such feelings as these!

"My time seemed now passed between lying hopelessly upon the sofa, endeavouring to sleep, and walking up and down the broad walk in the garden. And, oh! the anguish of that dreadful period! So vividly and with such awful power was 'the world to come' present to my spirit, that it seemed almost as if I were already in it; and the sun shining upon the broad church tower, which I could see in the distance over the garden wall, while the scorpion-sting of the Evil One was in my spirit, seemed like a foreshadowing of hell fire itself: and as if it needed but a word from the Almighty, and the world would be in flames, and be burnt up as in a moment! About this time a circumstance occurred, which much touched me. One morning when

about to enter upon the garden walk, a poor half-starved cat, that had evidently been driven from its home, in consequence of its having the influenza, ran up a tree, to get out of my way. Intensely pitying it, I called kindly to it, when it half turned round to look at me; and on my repeating the call, it at length took courage and came down to me. When it fairly mastered the situation, its gratitude knew no bounds, and its affection for me shewed itself in the most unmistakable manner. For days after, whenever I appeared in the garden, it bounded forward to meet me, and would walk up and down with me the whole time I was thus occupied; and it was a real comfort to me. But on the poor thing attempting one morning to enter the house, the servants, without my knowing it, had it killed; and my sympathizing companion in misery, to my great grief, was no more!

"But now after a period of upwards of nine months, the Lord began to set bounds to the fury of the Adversary, and the hurricane began to abate: although from time to time there were still dashes of condemnation on my conscience, as if to show what fearful havoc it had wrought. Strange to say, it terminated, as it had began, with a visit to a young woman on her death-bed. But oh! how different was *this* visit to the previous one! This visit issued in a most sweet and blessed conversion; and the deliverance of a dear precious soul from the furious assaults of the Evil One: which served likewise to bow down my own soul in adoring gratitude to my loving God and Father in Christ for all His wondrous grace and tender mercy to my sinful undeserving soul: to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. And now the Lord began to use me again as He had never used me before—giving me many, many more precious souls; and enabling me to build up many more believers in their most holy faith: and although it is now upwards of sixteen years since that awful period, yet He is blessing me still, and He will continue to do so, I doubt not, even unto the end."

I will not weaken the force of this narrative by any further observations of my own: but will merely state that believers who are strangers to temptations from the Evil One have often, I dare say, wondered how it is that persons so tempted are ordinarily able to see that such suggestions proceed from him: but the truth is, they have learned it by bitter experience; and I remember, as a youth, seeing a question in the Rev. Edward Bickersteth's book on "The Lord's Supper" to this effect:—"Have you learned to distinguish between the motions of the Spirit and the suggestions of Satan?" Occasionally, however, Satan acts in such a subtle manner that even the most experienced believer is unable to perceive at first what he is about, as such suggestions seem to proceed from his own mind. Satan will of course hide himself as long as he can from the tempted soul, as this answers his purpose much better than any open revelation of himself: but when he is discovered, he does not scruple to reveal himself; and when he pours forth upon the soul his floods of hellish blasphemies, it is easy enough to detect where they come from then.

I do not now enter upon the reasons of God's thus dealing with the souls of some of His people, because in my next Chapter I shall have to give a *résumé* of what has been before advanced, when this will be considered in its proper place: after which, with a view of completing the whole subject, I shall have to shew how our Blessed Lord Himself dealt with it in the Parable of the Sower; where in tracing these analogies, He compared the different kinds of ground in nature to the different classes of persons wrought upon by the Divine Word.

CHAPTER XI.

RECAPITULATORY AND REFLECTIVE.

"Since thy Father's arm sustains thee,
Peaceful be;
When a chastening hand restrains thee
It is He.
Know His love in full completeness,
Feel the measure of thy weakness;
If He wound thy spirit sore,
Trust Him more.

"Without murmur, uncomplaining,
In His hand
Leave whatever things thou canst not
Understand;
Though the world thy folly spurneth,
From thy faith in pity turneth,
Peace thy inmost soul shall fill,
Lying still.

"Fearest sometimes that thy Father
Hath forgot?
Though the clouds around thee gather,
Doubt Him not.
Always hath the daylight broken,
Always hath He comfort spoken!
Better hath He been for years
Than thy fears."

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." "The heathen raged, the Kingdoms were moved: He uttered His voice, the earth melted." "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. Jehovah of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."—PSA. xlvi. 1-3, 6, 10, 11.

Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."—JOHN xiv. 1-3.

BEFORE I proceed further, it would be as well that I should now briefly summarise what has been already advanced. In considering God's dealings with this earth, we have seen: (1) that it was God alone Who accomplished all these things; (2) that He took time to do them in; (3) that He effected them by His Word; (4) that what He did, He did perfectly; (5) that He took pleasure in it; (6) that He did all (although at first sight it might not always have appeared to have been so) for the earth's advantage and benefit; which (7) we shall see in the final result achieved—the whole resulting (as it was meet that it should result) in the advancement of His own honour and glory. And as this is precisely the method of God's dealings likewise with saved souls, I shall, in this Chapter, consider the subject in this light, with a view of deriving such practical instruction from it, as the subject itself seems to call for.

I. I say then, that it was God alone, Who accomplished all these things in the earth; and it is God alone, Who begins, and carries on to completion the work of grace in the heart of the saved sinner. "Ye have not chosen Me," said Jesus to His disciples, "but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you."[1] And in pleading for them with His Heavenly Father, He says, "I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy word."[2] "Wherefore, my beloved," says the Apostle in his Epistle to the Philippians, "as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God Which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."[3] "Being confident of this very thing, that He Which hath begun a good work in you will perform it till the day of Jesus Christ."[4]

[1] John xv. 16. [2] John xvii. 6. [3] Phil. ii. 12, 13. [4] Phil. i. 6.

II. But God took time also to do these things in. He might, had it pleased Him, have brought everything to perfection in a moment, as He created Adam and Eve: but this was not His method; and His method must of necessity be the right one. Indeed it is a rule of almost universal application in nature, that what takes but little time to be brought to maturity, as speedily decays and dies. Jonah's "gourd" "came up in a night and perished in a night:"[1] but "the cedars of Lebanon," and "the oaks of Bashan," which require ages for their full development, will endure for centuries. It is remarkable likewise as illustrative of this law, and that it does not so much depend upon the object, as upon the principle; that in countries highly favourable to rapidity of growth, the oak will rapidly come to maturity; but in this case, its wood is no harder, nor more enduring than that of any other tree.

But to return to our subject. Although the entire change in the earth's surface was undoubtedly accomplished in a lengthened period of time; yet there were portions of it no doubt, wherein these changes were effected in a shorter period. These rock-heavings and convulsions and detritions, of which we have before spoken, might have been sudden and violent and extensive; or they might have been gradual, and silent and restricted. They might have been effected, as has been intimated, by the internal operation of volcanic agency; or by the external efficacy of the waters of the great deep. There might have been powerful upheavings from the ocean bed; or gradual formations by the continuous action of the tidal waters. Much might have been effected beneath the waters themselves; and much within sight above them. But whether all, or any of these operations of nature had been resorted to by the All-wise Creator for the accomplishment of His purposes in the earth, in the production of the varied results which we now behold upon it; it would matter but little, if the ultimate end He had in view were accomplished by them. God has

[1] Jonah iv. 10.

moreover various ways of accomplishing the like results; and they are always right ways, and they never fail of the accomplishment of His object.

But to apply this to the matter in hand. God's dealings with the souls of His people are as various as the nature, kind, and degree of the discipline which they severally need. There are some, who require to be beaten, broken up, and crushed. Their wills are so stubborn and perverse, that they need much, and sometimes long-continued discipline, before they can be made to "yield themselves unto God." Some again require to be wrought upon by sudden, violent, and overwhelming providences, or torn by internal trouble and conflict; while others again need to be brought down and humbled by long continued, yet seemingly slight trials, hindrances, and afflictions. Now such dealings of God with the souls of His people, may happen to them continuously, or at intervals; together or separate; to different or to the same persons; and with or without, periods of refreshment or repose; just according to the will and wisdom of the grand Almighty Creator and fashioner of the "new creation" of God in their souls. But whether by one way, or another, it matters but little, if the ultimate purpose of God be accomplished in such souls—if, in the end, they be (as they are all destined to be,) "conformed to the image of" God's dear "Son:"[1] while the present, and no doubt also the future, result of such varied dealings of God with the souls of His people, (while they are all alike in one respect in being "born of God,") will be the formation among them of as infinite a variety of diversity of character, as is to be found on the surface of the earth itself!

III. But God effected these things by His Word: which is true of "the new creation" of God likewise. "The sin of Judah," we are told, "is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars."[2] "They

[1] Rom. viii. 29. [2] Jer. xvii. 1.

have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return."[1] "Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law," &c.[2] Now such hearts as these, like the natural indurated unbroken rock, to which they are here compared, would undoubtedly for ever have remained in their obdurate condition, unless they had been acted upon by some powerful internal or external force. And what is that force? The Lord tells us by this same prophet—"Is not My word like as a fire? saith Jehovah; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"[3] Preachers can indeed but *lay* this hammer upon the poor sinner's heart. It is God alone Who can wield it, and bring it crashing down upon that heart, and break it! And when He does this, it is effectual, and never until then. We read of "a soft tongue breaking the bone;"[4] but "the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."[5] And hearts thus dealt with by God's word, are said to be "broken." "O God, Thou hast cast us off, Thou hast scattered" (margin, "broken") "us, Thou hast been displeased; O turn Thyself to us again. Thou hast made the earth to tremble; Thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh."[6] And "a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."[7]

And the reason why God will not despise it, is because it is His Spirit's doing. For He has said of such, "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: that they may walk in My statutes, and keep Mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God."[8] Hence it is said of such souls, that they "are manifestly declared to be the

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[1] Jer. v. 3. [2] Zech. vii. 12. [3] Jer. xxiii. 9. [4] Prov. xxv. 16.
[5] Heb. iv. 12. [6] Psa. lx. 1, 2. [7] Psa. li. 17. [8] Ezek. xi. 19, 20.

epistle of Christ," "written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart."[1] "For this is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord"—a covenant which is anticipatively entered into with every believing Jew and Gentile in this Dispensation[2]—"I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people."[3]

And this must of necessity be effectual for the end proposed. "A law proposed unto us," says Owen, "is not to be compared for efficacy to a law inbred in us. Adam had a law of sin proposed to him in his temptation, but because he had no law of sin inbred and working in him, he might have withstood it. An inbred law must needs be effectual." "The law of God was at first inbred and natural to man; it was concreated with his faculties, and was their rectitude both in being and operation, in reference to man's end of living unto God and glorifying Him. Hence it had an especial power in the whole soul, to enable it unto all obedience; yea, and to make all obedience easy and pleasant. Such is the power of an inbred law. And though this law, as to the rule and dominion of it, be now by nature cast out of the soul, yet the remaining sparks of it, because they are inbred, are very powerful and effectual, as the Apostle declares, Rom. ii. 14, 15. Afterwards God renews this law, and writes it in tables of stone. But what is the efficacy of this law? Will it now, as it is external, and proposed unto men, enable them to perform the things that it exacts and requires? Not at all. God knew it would not, unless it were turned to an internal law again; that is, until from a moral outward rule, it be turned into an inward real principle. Wherefore God makes His law internal again, and implants it in the heart as it was at first, when He intends to give it power to produce obedience in His people; 'I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their

[1] 2 Cor. iii. 3. [2] Heb. x. 14-22. [3] Heb. viii. 10.

hearts,' Jer. xxxi. 31-33. This is that which God fixeth on, upon a discovery as it were, of the insufficiency of an outward law leading men unto obedience. The written law, saith He, will not do it; mercies and deliverances from distress will not effect it; trials and afflictions will not accomplish it: then, saith the Lord, will I take another course; I will turn the written law into an internal living principle in their hearts, and that will have such an efficacy as shall assuredly make them My people, and keep them so."[1]

And however the Lord's people may be wrought upon by the Divine Word, whether in a hidden way, as in dear Helen Plumtre's case,[2] who said, "while man thought I felt nothing, my God is witness what a bleeding heart I endeavoured to surrender to Him;" or, in an open one, as those 3,000 on the day of Pentecost, who "were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"[3]—whether in the gentle whisperings of love, as in the case of Lydia, "whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul;"[4] or by an earthquake voice, as in the case of the jailer at Philippi:[5] yet it is still the Word of the Lord alone in every case, that accomplishes the work that is wrought out in their souls. For "of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures"[6]—"being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."[7]

IV. Furthermore, what God did, He did perfectly: which must necessarily have been the case; because God Himself is "perfect."[8] And, therefore, it is said, "As for God, His way is perfect."[9] "The law of Jehovah is perfect. converting the soul."[10] And if God could say of the old

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[1] Owen on "Indwelling Sin."

[2] See my "Gleanings from the Book of Ruth," pp. 181-188.

[3] Acts ii. 37. [4] Acts xvi. 14. [5] Acts xvi. 26-34. [6] James i. 18.

[7] 1 Pet. i. 23. [8] Mat. v. 48. [9] Psa. xviii. 30. [10] Psa. xix. 7.

creation, when He had finished it, that He "saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good:"[1] much more will He say this of the "new creation," when this will be "finished," and of which the former was but a shadow! For this is intended, even "in the ages to come," to "shew the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."[2] And it is so mighty, and so marvellous a work, that He compares it to the resurrection of Christ Jesus Himself from the dead; when earth, hell, and devils combined together to endeavour to prevent it, but in vain!—"And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."[3] If this work, therefore, be begun in any soul, it must necessarily be a *perfect* work: for such an one is now "born of God,"[4] "partaker of a Divine nature,"[5] and is being "conformed to the image of" God's own dear "Son;"[6] and it will, therefore, in due time *be brought to perfection.*

It is *perfect* in itself *now*, although not yet *perfected;* for as the babe will grow up into a perfect man: so will the "babe in Christ"[7] ultimately grow up into a "perfect man"[8] *in Him.* Hence the subject of this work is urged to seek to be perfected, at the very commencement of his walk with God. "I am the Almighty God," said Jehovah unto Abraham, who was the federal head of all the faithful, "walk before Me, and be thou perfect."[9] "Be ye therefore perfect," said Jesus unto His disciples, "even as your Father Which is in heaven is perfect."[10] No Christian man, however, in this time state, can, strictly speaking, be con-

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[1] Gen. i. 31. [2] Eph. ii. 7. [3] Eph. i. 19-21. [4] John i. 13.
[5] 2 Pet. i. 4. [6] Rom. viii. 29. [7] 1 Cor. iii. 1. [8] Eph. iv. 13.
[9] Gen. xvii. 1. [10] Mat. v. 48.

sidered to be perfect *in himself:* because, if he speak the truth, he must still be obliged to say, "for I know that in me (that is, in my flesh)"—the nature which I derive from Adam—"there dwelleth no good thing:"[1] "for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."[2] All Christians, therefore, however holy or devoted they may be, can only have their absolute perfection in this life in Christ, their living Head in glory: "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord:"[3] Who by His "one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"[4]—they having been thus made "perfect through" His "comeliness, which" He has "put upon" them.[5]

In another, and a lower sense, however, believers, who "yield" themselves "unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and" their "members as instruments of righteousness unto God,"[6] are said to be "perfect" even in this time state, and God Himself reckons them so to be. Thus we read of Noah, that he was "perfect in his generations," and that he "walked with God;"[7] and yet he was not wholly so, as we learn from his conduct after the flood;[8] —of Job, that he was "perfect and upright" before God:[9] and yet even he was by no means faultless, as his narrative clearly shews. "Ye have heard of the patience of Job," says the Apostle.[10] "Yes," says Matthew Henry, in his quaint way, "and of his impatience too!" "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."[11] The perfect man, therefore, is the upright man—"the man who feareth Jehovah;" and of whom it is said, that he is "blessed."[12] Therefore, "let patience have her perfect

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[1] Rom. vii. 18. [2] Gal. v. 17. [3] 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. [4] Heb. x. 14.
[5] Ezek. xvi. 14. [6] Rom. vi. 13. [7] Gen. vi. 9. [8] Gen. ix. 21.
[9] Job i. 1, 8. [10] James v. 11. [11] Psa. xxxvii. 37. [12] Psa. cxii. 1.

work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."[1] And yet this same Apostle says, "In many things we offend all;" although he immediately adds, "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body."[2]

Hence another Apostle says, "God" "gave" "apostles," "prophets," "evangelists," "pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying," or building up, "of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."[3] And therefore, says he, "we preach" "Christ," "warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labour, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily."[4] And the day will therefore, come, when our Lord's consecration prayer on behalf of His people will be answered—"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are One: I in them, and Thou in Me, *that they may be perfect in one;* and that the world may know that Thou has sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me."[5] Yes: when order has been brought out of such confusion and chaos, purity out of such filth, and such a glorious "vessel for the finer"[6] out of such a seething mass of corruption—when we are "presented faultless before the presence of" God's own "glory with exceeding joy"[7]—when "Christ," Who "loved the Church, and gave Himself for it," shall "present it to Himself a glorious Church, not

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[1] James i. 4. [2] James iii. 2. [3] Eph. iv. 11-13. [4] Col. i. 28, 29.
[5] John xvii. 20-23. [6] Prov. xxv. 4. [7] Jude 24.

having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish "[1]—then, and not until then, will be seen *the infinite perfection* of God's handiwork in the "new creation" of God in the glory!

V. Can we wonder then, that God should now take pleasure in this work? How could it be otherwise! For nothing is acceptable unto God, but what comes from God —"that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost."[2] But how so? Because whatever is not of God, must of necessity be either from the devil, or the flesh. And as there can only be one infinitely Divine and perfect will, even the will of God Himself, He must of necessity hate all lawlessness, which is the essence of inconformity thereunto. Hence "unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom: Thou hast *loved righteousness* and *hated lawlessness*," *ἀνομίαν*; "*therefore* God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows."[3] And, *therefore* also, that blessed Son "gave Himself for us, that He might *redeem us from all lawlessness*," *ἀνομίας*, "and" so "purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works"[4]—a people, who, so far as the new creation of God in them is concerned, hate lawlessness even as He does. Hence God takes pleasure in them; and loves them, we are told, even with the very love, wherewith He loves His Son—"And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou has loved Me may be in them, and I in them."[5]

This is very difficult for them to realize at first, because the light reveals to them their old Adam-nature, which is hateful to them; and they cannot see the new nature,

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[1] Eph. v. 25, 27. [2] Rom. xv. 16. [3] Heb. i. 8, 9.
[4] Titus ii. 14. [5] John xvii. 26.

which, under the quickening of the Divine Spirit, is that which enables them to perceive the difference. When God looks upon them, however, it is different: for as their "old man was crucified with Christ,"[1] He looks upon them as they are to Him *in Christ;* and He takes pleasure in the work of His own hands in them. Hence we read "Jehovah taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy."[2] And again, "The steps of a good man are ordered by Jehovah: and He delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for Jehovah upholdeth him with His hand."[3] "He brought me forth also into a large place: He delivered me, because He delighted in me."[4] Nay, "as the Bridegroom rejoiceth over the Bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee."[5] "Jehovah thy God in thee is mighty; He will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love; He will joy over thee with singing."[6]

Hear indeed what some of the Lord's loved ones have said as to these things. After dear Helen Plumtre had uttered those words, "My God is witness, what a bleeding heart I endeavoured to surrender to Him," she immediately adds, "and oh, that I may witness before men and angels, how tenderly He healed the wounds, how gently He probed, when necessary, how gladly He poured in the oil and wine, how He rejoiced over a heart so vile, that I could not bear to keep it to myself, and only gave it to Him because I was tired of it! Truly, my Jesus, it was Thou Who didst spread Thy skirt over me, when I was lying in my blood. Thou madest me comely through Thy comeliness, and fragrant through the sweet odour of Thine atonement."[7] And the saintly Rutherford, in the full view of his old Adam-nature, thus writes:—"Whether I will or not, He will be kind to me—as if He had defied my guiltiness to make Him unkind, He so beareth His love in on me. Here

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[1] Rom. vi. 6. [2] Psa. cxlvii. 11. [3] Psa. xxxvii. 23, 24. [4] Psa. xviii. 19. [5] Isa. lxii. 5. [6] Zeph. iii. 17. [7] Letters, pp. 173, 174.

I die with wondering, that justice hindereth not love; for there are none in hell nor out of hell, more unworthy of Christ's love. Shame may confound and scour"—*i.e.*, startle, or frighten—"me once to hold up my black mouth to receive one of Christ's undeserved kisses. If my innerside were turned out, and all men saw my vileness, they would say to me, 'It is a shame for thee to stand still, while Christ kiss thee and embrace thee.'"[1]

VI. Moreover, we have seen that God did all these things (although at first sight it might not have appeared to have been so,) for the earth's advantage and benefit—the whole work resulting, as it was indeed meet that it should result, to the advancement of the Lord's own honour and glory. This is apparent to us now. But had we seen the crust of the earth, as it had just been broken up, with the molten lava bursting forth from beneath, and pouring among the debris of rocks, that had been torn up by it; had we seen the roaring and foaming and hissing of the mighty deep, as it mingled with the burning mass, and swept over, and dashed among the huge fragments of rock, as they were thus split off and hurled upwards; had we witnessed this gigantic scene of desolation, and the awful conflicts of this elemental war; we should probably in our short-sighted wisdom have imagined, that this was a very singular way of benefiting the poor distracted earth: but could we, on the other hand have seen, in the actual execution of the Lord's purposes, how admirably this stupendous plan was adapted to accomplish the ends proposed; could we have witnessed the gradual cessation of the fearful strife, the cooling down of the heated mass, the retiring of the waters to the place the Lord had assigned for them, and the formation of the fruitful earth, as it rose up out of the waters as they subsided from off its surface; we should then have admired and adored the wisdom, as well as the power and beneficence of its great Creator and benefactor, God. For He "laid the foundations

[1] Letters, p. 246.

of the earth, that it should not be moved for ever. Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. At Thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which Thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over, that they turn not again to cover the earth. He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills." "He watereth the hills from His chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Thy works."[1]

Now the newly-awakened soul but too frequently passes an equally foolish judgment upon the Lord's dealings with himself, from the sight and feeling of the internal conflicts which sometimes take place in his own spirit, as well as at the presence, prevalence, and power of sin, temptation and trouble in his heart; and he is then inclined with Rebekah, when "the children struggled together within her," to say, "If it be so, *why* am I thus?"[2] "How long wilt Thou forget me, O Jehovah? for ever? how long wilt Thou hide Thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me? Consider and hear me, O Jehovah my God; lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death."[3] But as time rolls on, and he begins to see something of the meaning of the Lord's dealings with him, his views and feelings alter, he sees and deplores his own shortsightedness and folly, he grieves to think that he should so greatly have dishonoured his Lord by his unbelieving fears and suspicions; and he ultimately acknowledges, even with tears of gratitude and joy, that "He" not only "doeth all things well,"[4] but that He doeth them for his own soul's benefit and advantage. Therefore, "My son," saith the wise man, "despise not the chastening of Jehovah; neither be weary of His correction: for whom Jehovah loveth He

[1] Psa. civ. 5-10, 13. [2] Gen. xxv. 22. [3] Psa. xiii. 1-3. [4] Mark vii. 37.

correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."[1] "For they verily," says the Apostle, "for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness."[2] And what higher end could the Lord have, or what greater blessing could be imparted to the saved soul than this? "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake."[3] "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."[4]

Nay, even the sins and falls of believers, though the Lord will chastise them for them—"visiting their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes"[5]—shall not destroy them, but shall be overruled, and be among the "all things" that shall "work together, for" their "good."[6]

We have a lively emblem of this, in the formation of the clouds, which we know are produced by the action of the sun's rays upon the waters of the ocean: which we have seen to be an emblem of the restless unconverted heart of the sinner. Clouds, as I pointed out in my first Vol. of "The Hidden Mystery," are emblematical of troubles and afflictions, which are occasioned by our fallen nature; but as the former are made subservient in the overruling providence of God, for the earth's advantage and fruitfulness: so the latter are employed by the Lord for a like purpose, for the spiritual growth and fruitfulness of the soul of the saved sinner. "Whatsoever Jehovah pleased, that did He in Heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: He maketh lightnings for the rain: He bringeth the wind out of His treasuries."[7] "Who covereth the heaven with

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[1] Prov. iii. 11, 12. [2] Heb. xii. 10. [3] Phil. i. 29. [4] 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. [5] Psa. lxxxix. 32. [6] Rom. viii. 28. [7] Psa. cxxxv. 6, 7.

clouds, Who prepareth rain for the earth, Who maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry."[1] Then,

> "Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
> The clouds ye so much dread,
> Are big with mercy, and shall break
> In blessings on your head."[2]

VII. But what as to the final result achieved? "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good."[3]

Here then we have the complete accomplishment of God's purposes with respect to the earth. The wisdom of the means employed likewise for the accomplishment of these purposes is likewise apparent. The earth being now fully fitted and prepared, at the word of the living God, there springs up at once upon it the "tender grass" (margin), there rises up "the herb, after his kind," varied and endless, and there shoots aloft the mighty "tree," "with a shadowing shroud, and of a high stature," "fair in his greatness," "glorious in his beauty,"[4] and "of his kind," unnumbered: while "the whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing."[5]

Now according to the emblematical mode of dealing with this subject, which I have hitherto adopted—a method which, in the next Chapter we shall see our Lord Himself also

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[1] Psa. cxlvii. 8, 9.

[2] It is worthy of note also, that in Egypt, which represents the world, there is "*no rain*" (Zech. xiv. 18): but in *her* "cloudy" and dark "day" (Ezek. xxx. 3-4), the rain is turned into "*hail*" which God has "reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war" (Job xxxviii. 22-23)—aye, and "thunder and hail, and fire running along upon the ground" (Exod. ix. 23)!

[3] Gen. i. 11-13. [4] Ezek. xxxi. 3, 7, 8. [5] Isa. xiv. 7.

adopting—this period in the earth's history might be taken to represent that stage, so to speak, in the converted heart's progress in the Divine life, wherein he has in a great measure obtained the victory over all his spiritual enemies; when he is so ripened in grace, that internal conflicts and bitter temptations are no longer needed, and are, therefore, unsent; when his profession is flourishing, and his walk uniform and consistent; when he is established in grace, and his graces are growing, and in active exercise; when he has much heavenly-mindedness and spirituality, and has much and frequent communion with his Redeemer;—when in fine he is an established and flourishing believer; and is fruitful in good works, to the praise of the glory of God's grace.

The same writer, from whom I have before quoted, when speaking of such an one says:—"By way of distinction, I assigned to A"— "grace in the blade"—"the characteristic of *desire*, to B"—"grace in the ear"—"that of *conflict*. I can think of no single word more descriptive of the state of C"—"grace in the full corn in the ear"—"than *contemplation*. His eminence, in comparison of A, does not consist in the sensible warmth and fervency of his affections: in this respect many of the most exemplary believers have looked back with a kind of regret upon the time of their espousals, when, though their judgments were but imperfectly formed, and their views of Gospel-truths were very indistinct, they felt a fervour of spirit, the remembrance of which is both humbling and refreshing; and yet they cannot recal the same sensations. Nor is he properly distinguished from B by a consciousness of his acceptance in the Beloved, and an ability of calling God his Father; for this I have supposed B has attained to. Though as there is a growth in every grace, C having had his views of the Gospel, and of the Lord's faithfulness and mercy, confirmed by a longer experience, his assurance is of course more stable and more simple, than when he first saw himself safe from all condemnation. Neither has he, properly speaking, any more strength or

stock of grace inherent in himself than B, or even than A. He is in the same state of absolute dependence, as incapable of performing spiritual acts, or of resisting temptations, by his own power, as he was at the first day of his setting out. Yet, in a sense, he is much stronger, because he has a more feeling and constant sense of his own weakness. *The Lord has been long teaching him this lesson by a train of various dispensations; and through grace he can say, He has not suffered so many things in vain.* His heart has deceived him so often, that he is now in a good measure weaned from trusting to it; *and therefore he does not meet with so many disappointments.* And having found again and again the vanity of all other helps, he is now taught to go to the Lord at once for 'grace to help in every time of need.' Thus he is 'strong' not in himself, but 'in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.' But C's happiness and superiority to B lies chiefly in this, that by the Lord's blessing on the use of means, such as prayer, reading, and hearing of the Word, *and by a sanctified improvement of what he has seen of the Lord, and of his own heart*, in the course of his experience, he has attained clearer, deeper, and more comprehensive views of the mystery of redeeming Love; of the harmony and glory of all the Divine perfections manifested in and by Him to the Church; of the stability, beauty, fulness, and certainty of the Holy Scriptures, and of the heights, depths, lengths, and breadths of the love of God in Christ. Thus, though his sensible feelings may not be so warm as when he was in the state of A, *his judgment is more solid, his mind more fixed, his thoughts more habitually exercised upon the things within the vail. His great business is to behold the glory of God in Christ; and by beholding, he is changed into the same image,* AND BRINGS FORTH, *in an eminent and uniform manner,* THE FRUITS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, *which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.* His contemplations are not barren speculations, but have a *real* influence, and enable him *to exemplify the Christian character to more advantage, and with more consistence,* than can, in the present state of things, be expected either from A or B."

And then, after a particular notice of several graces, in which C shines conspicuously, he thus concludes:—"The sun, in his daily course, beholds nothing so excellent and honourable upon earth as C, though perhaps he may be confined to a cottage, and is little known or noticed by man. But he is the object and residence of Divine Love, the charge of angels, and ripening for everlasting glory. Happy C! his toils, sufferings, and exercises will be soon at an end; soon his desires will be accomplished; and He Who has loved him, and redeemed him with His own blood, will receive him to Himself, with a 'Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'"[1] And "the glory of Jehovah shall endure for ever: Jehovah shall rejoice in His works."[2]

And having now, therefore, completed this subject, I shall, in my next Chapter, have to shew, how the Lord Himself makes use of the very same imagery, for the purpose of manifesting the differences between the souls of men, and shewing the absolute necessity of God's effectual working in their hearts, before such blessed effects could ever be produced.

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[1] Newton's Works, pp. 61-63. See also the Writer's 2nd vol. of "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," Chap. iv., Sec. 3, pp. 166-189, on "The Work of the Holy Ghost in the heart of a saved sinner."

[2] Psa. civ. 31.

CHAPTER XII.

GOD'S HUSBANDRY.

"The God that made my heart is He alone
That of Himself both can and will
Give rest unto my thoughts and fill
Them full of all content and quietness:
That so I may possess
My soul in patience,
Until He find it time to call me hence.

"In Thee, as in my centre, shall
The lines of all my longings fall.
To Thee, as to mine anchor, surely tied,
My ship shall safely ride,
On Thee, as on my bed
Of soft repose, I'll rest my weary head.

"Thou, Thou alone, shalt be my whole desire:
I'll nothing else require
But Thee, or for Thy sake.
In Thee I'll sleep secure; and, when I wake,
Thy glorious face shall satisfy
The longing of my looking eye.
I'll roll myself on Thee, as on my rock,
When threatening dangers mock."

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesu's blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesu's Name:
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

"When darkness veils His glorious face,
I rest on His unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil:
On Christ, &c.

"His oath, His covenant, and His blood,
Support me in the sinking flood!
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay:
On Christ, &c.

"When the last awful trump shall sound,
Oh, may I then in Him be found,
Clothed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne:
On Christ, &c."

"Behold, a sower went forth to sow: and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up. Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up, and choked them. But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold."—MAT. xiii. 3-8.

"Ye are God's husbandry"—(margin, tillage).—1 COR. iii. 9.

"Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundred-fold: and Jehovah blessed him."—GEN. xxvi. 12.

"And his father Isaac" "blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which Jehovah hath blessed."—GEN. xxvii. 26, 27.

WE now come to consider how our Blessed Lord Himself dealt with this subject, in what is called "The Parable of the Sower." There are of course various aspects in which this parable may be viewed; but I shall confine myself chiefly to one only. Passing by, therefore, all reference to "the mysteries of the Kingdom," which are unfolded by our Lord in the 13th Chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, and which I have considered at some length in my Second Volume of "Outlines of Prophetic Truth;"[1] and without touching upon, either the purposes of God, or the responsibility of man, in connexion therewith, I shall limit my notice of it to the main point—the differences in the several kinds of soil, in which the seed was sown; with the view of shewing what the Lord Himself would have us to infer therefrom

[1] Chap. vi., pp. 249-335.

—the absolute necessity of God's own dealings with saved souls, under all circumstances, in order that they may be rendered "meet," or well adapted, "to bring forth" "fruit unto God."[1]

I have already alluded in the Preface to this Work to the fact, that my Exposition of the Parable of the Sower, which is now out of print, arose out of this Work when in its embryo state; and, as I have given an Epitome of it in the Sixth Chapter of my Second Volume of "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," I shall here introduce it, instead of writing it out afresh in another form. As I do not purpose, however, to give a full exposition of the Parable, I shall content myself with noting (1) The nature of the seed sown; (2) The characters of the several persons, in whose minds and hearts the seed *was* sown; (3) The determined opposition of the Adversary to the sowing of the seed itself, as well as to its growth and development, after it has been sown; and (4) The prophetical aspect of the subject, when viewed with reference to the bearing of the Parable upon "the field" of "the world," at large. In the first place, then, let us note

I. *The nature of the seed sown.*

1. It is "*precious* seed." "Behold," saith St. James, "the husbandman waiteth for the *precious* fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain."[2] "They that sow in tears," saith the Psalmist, "shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing *precious* seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."[3] The seed is precious, then, because

(1) *It is from God.* It is "the seed" of "the Word;" and this word is God's Word. Everything from God is precious: but His word is more especially so. In these days, we have God's word in such rich abundance among us, that men despise it, and think lightly of it. It might be different, if we were deprived of it altogether. It was so in

[1] Heb. vi. 7; 1 Cor. iii. 9; Rom. vi. 22. [2] James v. 7. [3] Psalm cxxvi. 5, 6.

the days of Eli. "The word of Jehovah was *precious* in those days; there was no open vision."[1] It was so in the dark days preceding the Reformation in this country. "Ye heard before," says Fox, the martyrologist, when writing upon the invention and benefit of printing, "how Nicholas Belward bought a New Testament in those days (*i.e.*, in the year 1429) "for four marks and forty pence" (*i.e.*, for £2 16s. 8d., a sum which is equivalent to upwards of £30 of our money): "whereas now," says he, writing in 1582, "the same price will well serve forty persons with so many books"[2] (in our days nearer 500). We have read likewise of a poor "Gospeller," who gave a cartload of hay for a few leaves of one of St. Paul's Epistles, so precious were they in his sight. Surely such men as these will rise up in the judgment, and condemn multitudes in these days, who care not to possess God's holy Word, when they could, if they desired it, obtain a Bible for one shilling, and a New Testament for fourpence! Hence it is precious because

(2) *It giveth life.* It is, under God, the great means of the conversion of sinners unto God. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning: of His own will *begat He us with the word of truth*, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, receive with meekness *the engrafted word*, which is *able to save your souls.*"[3] Hence St. Paul calls it "the *word of salvation:*" for when addressing the Jews at Antioch, he said, "Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is *the word of this salvation* sent"[4]—and *the Gospel* of salvation:" because it is the revelation of the *good tidings* of God's love to His people in Christ Jesus: for writing to his Ephesian converts, he says, "Ye trusted in Christ," "after that ye heard the *word of truth*, the *Gospel of your salvation:* having

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[1] 1 Sam. iii. 1. [2] Vol. iii., 721. [3] James i. 17, 18, 21. [4] Acts xiii. 26.

believed," πιστεύσαντες, i.e., on believing, in Whom also "ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."[1] "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ," wrote he to the Corinthians, "yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have *begotten you through the Gospel*,"[2] i.e., the preaching of the Gospel. "For," says he to the Romans, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for *it is the power of God unto salvation* to every one that believeth."[3] The word is precious, therefore, because it giveth life: and it giveth life, because it revealeth Him in Whom alone we can have life, Christ Himself, "Who is our life."[4] Hence it is precious again because

(3) *It testifies of Christ:* and this is of course its chief glory. "Search the Scriptures," said our Lord to the Jews, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which *testify*," or bear witness "of Me,"[5] *i.e.*, as the alone source of Life. Indeed they were written for this very end: for "many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this Book: but *these* are written, *that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ*, the Son of God, and that *believing ye might have life* through His Name."[6] Hence it is called "the Word of Christ:"[7] for it is full of Him. Christ is the grand theme of its discourses, the subject of its Divine Songs, the object of its prophecies, the antitype of its types, and the substance of all its shadows. Notice further, then, that

2. *This seed is indestructible.* It can never die. "Seeing," says the Apostle Peter, "ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible *seed*, but of *incorruptible*, by the *word of God*, which *liveth and abideth for ever*."[8] Hence it is indestructible

(1) *In itself.* "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth,

[1] Eph. i. 13. [2] 1 Cor. iv. 15. [3] Rom. i. 16, 17. [4] Col. iii. 4.
[5] John v. 39. [6] John xx. 30, 31. [7] Col. iii. 16. [8] 1 Peter i. 22, 23.

and the flower thereof falleth away. But *the word of the Lord* ENDURETH FOR EVER. And *this* is *the word* which *by the Gospel is preached* unto you."[1] And it is *Christ's word* that we are thus considering. Therefore, says He, "heaven and earth shall pass away: but MY *word shall* NOT PASS AWAY."[2] It is indestructible also

(2) *In the heart of the believer.* "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for *His seed* REMAINETH IN HIM: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."[3] "*They* went out from us, but they were *not of us;* for *if* they had been of us *they would no doubt have continued with us:* but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were *not* all of us. But *ye* have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." And "the anointing which ye have received of Him *abideth in you,* and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, *ye shall abide in Him.*"[4] But notice farther that

3. *This seed is very productive seed.* It is the seed of God, and must, therefore, needs be so. Like the seed spoken of in Gen. i. 11, 12, it is "*seed in itself*"—seed which contains within itself the elements of its own reproduction. Not indeed that the seed contains any vitality or productiveness in itself, as *of itself,* in the spiritual, any more than in the natural world: but being *God's* seed, it is the special object of His care; and His Spirit works in it to this end. Indeed without the powerful inworking of the Divine Spirit, there neither would be, nor yet could there be, any life or energy in it. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith Jehovah of Hosts."[5] "Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created: and Thou renewest the face of the earth."[6] Hence the Apostle Paul, bearing witness of the Thessalonians, that "the word of

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[1] 1 Peter i. 24, 25. [2] Luke xxi. 33. See also Isaiah xl. 8; Mark xiii. 31.
[3] 1 John iii. 9. [4] 1 John ii. 19, 20, 27. [5] Zech. iv. 6. [6] Psalm civ. 30.

God" "effectually worked in them in that believed;"[1] and urging the Colossians, that "the word of Christ" might "dwell in them richly in all wisdom;"[2] assured the Corinthians, that he "had hope" of them, "when their faith was increased, that he should be enlarged by them, according to his rule abundantly, to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond them."[3]

It would have been interesting to have given several instances, both from nature and from grace, of the extreme vitality and productiveness of the seed natural, as well as of the seed spiritual: but I must confine myself to a few only under each head.

Speaking of the former, Jesse tells us, in his "Gleanings from Natural History," that "in trenching for a plantation part of Bushey Park, which had probably been undisturbed by spade or plough since, and perhaps long before, the reign of Charles I.; the ground was turned up in the winter, and in the following summer it was covered with a profusion of the tree mignonette, pansies, and the wild raspberry, plants which are nowhere found in a wild state in the neighbourhood;"—and that "on removing the peat," from "some land which surrounds an old castle, formerly belonging to the Regent Murray, near Moffatt," "which is about six or eight inches in thickness, a stratum of soil appears, which is supposed to have been a cultivated garden in the time of the Regent, and from which a variety of flowers and plants spring, some of them little known even at this time in Scotland."[4] While in an antique vase, which was discovered buried in a mummy-pit in Egypt, several years ago, by Sir Gardiner Wickinson, the characters on which proved it to be 2,844 years old, there were found a few grains of wheat, and some peas; one of which was brought to maturity by Mr. William Grimstone, at his Herbary at Highgate, in 1844, the fertility of which was so extraordinary, that it was said the seed would yield, when

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[1] 1 Thes. ii. 13. [2] Col. iii. 16. [3] 2 Cor. x. 16. [4] First Series, pp. 138-140.

properly planted, a return of seven hundred or eight hundred fold.

Speaking of the latter, I might instance the case of Luke Short, who when a lad of fifteen heard a moving sermon from the Rev. John Flavel, the minister of Dartmouth, in England, upon the text, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." Shortly after this, he went to sea, and sailed to America, where he passed the rest of his life. When 100 years old, he was able to work on his farm, and his mind was not in the least degree impaired, although he had lived all his time in carelessness and sin—"a sinner a hundred years old," and ready to "die accursed." One day, however, as he sat in the field, he busied himself in reflecting upon his past life; and while he was thinking of the days of his youth, Mr. Flavel's sermon flashed into his mind, a considerable portion of which he remembered. He saw in an instant, that he was one, who *had not* loved the Lord Jesus Christ; and he feared that that awful anathema would be his portion for ever. He was deeply convinced of sin, and was at length brought to the blood of sprinkling, and lived to the age of 116 years, giving every evidence of his having been truly "born again" of God. It was as if the seed of God had lodged in a crack of his rocky heart, which Satan, the fowl of the air, could not get at; and which fructified the moment the Lord Himself had broken that rock by the hammer of His Word: and had produced productive soil, wherein it could take root, and flourish.

Take one more instance only. "A book brought in a pedlar's pack to the door of the father of Richard Baxter, was the means of converting to Christianity the author of 'The Saints' Rest.' His works in turn, were the means of moulding the religious character of Philip Doddridge; whose book, entitled 'The Rise and Progress of Religion,' was the instrument of changing the religious character of William Wilberforce; whose 'Practical view of Christianity,' brought Legh Richmond to the knowledge of the truth.

Richmond was the author of 'The Dairyman's Daughter,' which has been translated into more than fifty languages, and has been blessed to the conversion of thousands of men."[1] "All the good that has been done by the preaching, labours, and writings of Baxter—by the preaching, labours and writings of Doddridge—by the labours, and writings of Wilberforce—by the preaching, labours, and writings of Legh Richmond; together with all the good which has been effected by means of all the men and women who have been converted through the instrumentality of these men (need we go on expounding?) to be traced to a book left by a pedlar at the house of Baxter's father! How wonderful!"[2] Truly then the "*seed of God*"—for it could have only been the seed of God's own Word, that could have produced such results as these—is amazingly and inconceivably *productive;* and is indeed "*precious* seed." And did not our blessed Lord say of Himself, "Except *a corn of wheat* fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit"?[3] And was it not also said, "There shall be *an handful of corn* in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure for ever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed"?[4] And now let us notice

II. *The characters of the several persons, in whose minds and hearts this seed was sown.*

We have here four classes of persons depicted: and these four classes comprehend *all* hearers of the word preached; and they are presented to us *in gradation.* We have

1. *The wayside hearer.* The heart of this hearer is compared to a frequented way, that had long been trodden down by the occupiers of, and dwellers in, that region; who continually passed up and down thereon. It, therefore,

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[1] Drummond's Stirling Tracts, No. 45. The claims of the Christian Press on the religious community.

[2] Ibid. [3] John xii. 24. [4] Psalm lxxii. 16, 17.

represents the heart of an unconverted person, who, in hearing the Word, is utterly unmoved by it; as he hears it, without in the least degree "understanding" it, as having reference to himself. The *dwellers* who had grown up in, and who occupied this region, might, therefore, be compared to the natural "desires of the flesh, and of the mind," the "fulfilling" of which denotes "the children of disobedience: among whom we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh," and "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," "dead in trespasses and sins: wherein in time passed we *walked according to the course of this world*" (i.e., *in the trodden path*,) "according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now energizeth" in them.[1] And they were so numerous and active, that they had completely *trodden down the whole region;* and so *hard* had they trodden it that no seed could by possibility, *while it continued in that state*, get *into* it, but lay there as it fell, *upon its surface:* and so active were they, that the few seeds that *did* fall upon it, were "*trodden down*" before "the fowls of the air," which it is said "came *immediately*," could get to them.

And what a fearful view does this give us of the blindness and hardness of the human heart by nature. Alas! how many poor souls, exclusively engrossed with their own worldly objects and pursuits, "hear the word of the kingdom," in this listless, heartless manner; wholly unconscious of its Divine power and energy, because they feel it not; as well as entirely ignorant of its spiritual meaning and application to themselves; and therefore never even dreaming for a moment of attending to its summons: and yet "there is but a step between" them and an awful everlasting "death!"

This description of hearer, therefore, applies to the case of those, and they are numerous, where the seed sown produces no present apparent effect in the heart whatever.

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[1] Eph. ii. 1-3.

2. *The Stony-ground hearer.* The seed in this case is said to have fallen "upon *a rock*," "where it had not *much* earth." Hence it would seem, there was a *sprinkling* of earth *upon* the rock, sufficient perhaps for it to lie in, but not sufficient for it to take root in. This rock, therefore, represents the natural unconverted heart of the sinner—a rock unbroken by the "*hammer*" of the "Word"[1]—a heart unhumbled, unsoftened, unsubdued—a primitive rock unchanged in its character, and standing out, as it were, in its native hardness: for the narrative says that it was "because there was NO DEEPNESS *of earth*"—because *the internal structure was unaltered;* that the germ from the seed could not pierce it, so as to take root therein: and then also, "because *it lacked moisture*"—the gracious unction of the Holy Spirit, which invariably accompanies a *real* work of grace in the heart, it necessarily "withered away."

The vitality of the seed, however, was such, that it "sprang up immediately," notwithstanding the uncongeniality of the "stony ground," into which it "fell." It sprang up immediately; not as it were before the material for a root had been fully developed, but absolutely *without any root whatever:* for it is expressly said, that "it had *no* root." From this fact, therefore, coupled with the after statements in the explanation, we learn that the heart of this hearer, although in a measure, enlightened by the Word, was notwithstanding manifestly unchanged and unconverted by it: and from the chief stress being laid, in the after explanation of his "immediate" reception of the Word "*with joy*" without any statement of his having received it also "*with affliction* and joy *in the Holy Ghost;*"[2] which is the general mode of its reception by *real* converts, we may clearly learn from this, that this hearer had not been deeply, or even *truly* convinced of his sin; did not view it in its heinousness, as having been committed against a God of awful holiness and of infinite love; had no real sense of his

[1] Jer. xxiii. 29. [2] 1 Thes. i. 6.

natural depravity and corruption, and of his obnoxiousness thereby to the wrath of a justly offended God;[1] and was quite destitute of that evangelical repentance and heartfelt abhorrence of himself, and of his own righteousness,[2] and the yearning after that of Another:[3] without some sense of which no real work of grace can ever exist in the heart.

Many such souls, however, have at some time or other, been under some convictions of sin *under the law*—convictions respecting the *guilt* of sin, rather than the *sinfulness* of sin—convictions which make them fear for *punishment*, but produce *no hatred to sin itself*. For the Apostle tells us, that "some," who "came out of Egypt by Moses," although they "heard" God's "voice," "did provoke." "So we see," adds he, "that they could not enter" ("into His rest,") "*because of unbelief*."[4] Now as he was speaking in a Gospel sense and applying the case of these unbelievers to Gospel times, we are here taught that some *Who come out of Egypt* BY MOSES BELIEVE NOT, *and never enter into rest;* or, in Gospel language, that *conviction of sin* UNDER THE LAW *is* NOT FAITH IN CHRIST; and that many, who are thus convinced, never do believe, but "in time of temptation fall away," and perish. And this is what another Apostle means, when he says, "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having *saved the people* OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT, *afterwards destroyed them that* BELIEVED NOT."[5] He destroyed them for their unbelief: for those who are brought out of Egypt only in *this* manner are *always for going back again:* because *their* HEARTS *are in Egypt still.*[6]

And thus was it with this hearer: for there was clearly no radical change in his heart; but his *feelings* being moved and excited, and being himself much more anxious for

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[1] Eph. ii. 3. [2] Job xliii. 5, 6. [3] Mat. 5, 6.
[4] Heb. iii. 16, 15, 11, 19. [5] Jude 5.
[6] See Num. xi. 18; xiv. 3, 4; Isaiah xxxi. 1; Jer. ii. 18; xlii. 19; Acts vii. 39; Rev. xi. 8.

present ease than for future holiness, he had been cheated it seems into a false and delusive peace—a "peace" which was consistent with the retention of his bosom sins, and which, therefore, came not to him "through the blood of the cross."[1] Hence he "received the Word with joy;" dreaming possibly, like Pliable, in the "Pilgrim's Progress," that all good was thenceforth his; and like him also, *proving* from his *after conduct* that no *radical* change had ever been effected in his heart—that the root of the matter was not in him[2] or, as the narrative has it, that "he had *no root in himself:*" and so "by and bye he is offended;" and goes away, and leaves Christ altogether.[3]

But notice that the effects produced in this soul, whatever they were, were clearly produced in it *by the seed sown* —the seed of the Word: and he acquired thereby some little insight into the knowledge of Christ: for it is said, that he "for a while *believed.*" It was, however, a mere kind of intellectual assent to the doctrines of the Gospel, which might, indeed, and no doubt did influence his *feelings*, but failed to influence or transform his *heart:* for "faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."[4] Such a believer was Simon Magus: who nevertheless had "neither part nor lot in this matter: for" his "*heart* was *not right in the sight of God:*" for he was still "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."[5] Such an one also was Herod, who was so far wrought upon by the Word, that he "feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he *heard him*, he *did many things* and *heard him gladly:*" but who could yet, when that same John interfered with his sinful projects and pursuits, shut him up in prison; aye, and afterwards send and behead him there likewise![6]

And when those, who "have escaped the pollutions of the world *through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,*" become "again entangled therein and over-

[1] Job xix. 28. [2] Job xix. 28. [3] John vi. 66.
[4] James ii. 17. [5] Acts viii. 21, 23. [6] Mark vi. 20, 17, 27.

come, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning:"[1] which would have been an anomaly, had we not seen what manner of persons they *were* at their beginning. "*They went out from us*," said the Apostle: "but *they were not of us;* for *if* they had been of us, *they would no doubt have continued with us;* but they went out *that they might be* MADE MANIFEST that they were not all of us."[2] At their first setting out perhaps, you could not have distinguished them from genuine believers; but their after conduct proved them to be but counterfeits. And alas! the so-called Christian Church is full of them.

3. *The thorny ground hearer.* We are not told what kind of ground this was, into which the seed fell: but we learn it by implication. It was clearly rugged and barren ground—ground very favourable, no doubt, for the production of thorns and briars; but unsuitable for the growth and healthy development of seed-corn, which seems to have been the seed referred to in the Parable. This description of hearer evidently, therefore, refers to the case of persons who may have had a certain kind of educational knowledge of Christianity, if I may so speak, (as there seemed to have been in this case some attempt at cultivation) aided by convictions from time to time, most probably in conjunction with such knowledge; by means of which some salutary influence had been produced upon their actions: as the seed effected a lodgment within them, and showed itself above ground: clearly proving that some outward manifestation had undoubtedly been effected in their conduct thereby. There was, however, here, as in the last case, no real or decided change of character: but the heart remained all the while untransformed, unconverted, unrenewed.

From the description in the Parable, it would seem that the whole ground was entirely covered with thorns, and that they were very thick together. They were likewise well rooted and grounded, and had already sprung up, and got a fair start before the seed "fell among" them; and

[1] 2 Peter ii. 20. [2] 1 John ii. 19.

springing up "with it," under every advantage to themselves—a suitable soil, an admirable situation, a good root, and a prior occupancy of the whole space of the ground; and with every disadvantage to the seed sown among them —a soil unsuitable, a confined position in a most unfavourable situation, and with an insufficient root: no wonder that the thorns ultimately obtained the mastery over the seed, and "choked it," so that it yielded no fruit.

Now "thorns," as we know, are the fruit and consequence of God's curse on account of sin: as the Lord said unto Adam, "*Cursed* is the *ground* for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; *thorns* also and *thistles* shall it bring forth unto thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; *in the sweat of thy face* shalt thou eat *bread.*"[1] So that since God's curse of the ground on account of sin, thorns spring up therein of themselves naturally and easily, and in spite of opposition: but bread-corn must be obtained from it by dint of tillage, labour, and toil. And this is true of "the ground of the heart" likewise: for these thorns are deeply rooted in our hearts at our very birth; and they spring up naturally, and with a power of root and growth that is amazing. You have but to attempt to extirpate them, and you will see. Now no good fruit can come from off this soil until it has been renewed, and the wilderness of "briers and thorns" in a measure cleared away. Hence the direction of the Word is, "*Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns:*" which is immediately explained by the words following, "Circumcise yourselves to Jehovah, and *take away the foreskins of your hearts*, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest My fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, *because of the evil of your doings.*"[2] "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that *circumcision* which is *outward* in the *flesh;* but he is a Jew, which is one *inwardly;* and *circumcision* is that of the *heart*, in the *spirit* and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men but

[1] Gen. iii. 17-19. [2] Jer. iv. 3, 4.

of God."[1] "For we are the circumcision," says the Apostle, "which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and *have no confidence in the flesh.*"[2]

This ground, therefore, being wholly covered with thorns might denote, as indeed we see, in the explanation given of it by our Lord, that it did denote, that this heart was still completely infested with the fruit and consequences of its natural corruption and depravity; and that it was, therefore, still under the curse of a violated law on account of sin; and by consequence also in an unconverted and unrenewed state: as may be made manifest also from a comparison of this man and the man "whose transgression is *forgiven,*" and "whose sin is *covered;*" who is said to be "*blessed,*" and to be one "to whom Jehovah will not impute sin"—having imputed it to Christ Himself, His Divine sin offering and surety, as we have seen. For the removal of the curse, removes with it likewise the *effects* and *consequences* of the curse itself. Hence it is immediately added, "and in whose spirit there is no guile:"[3] for the prevalence and reigning power of sin in the heart, is incompatible with a state of forgiveness: for "Christ was exalted to give *repentance* to Israel, and *forgiveness of sins.*"[4] The two are inseparable, as the Apostle always declared, who preached "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."[5] The superior power and prevalency, therefore, of sin in this heart—which was the *fruit* and *effects* of the curse—shewed clearly that *the curse itself* was still upon him: for until a soul truly believes in Christ, "the wrath of God abideth on him."[6]

Solomon has well described the case of such a person, and in the figurative language of our Parable, "I went by the field of the *slothful,* and by the vineyard of the man *void of understanding;* and lo, it was ALL *grown over with thorns,* and nettles *had covered the face thereof,* and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it

[1] Rom. ii. 28, 29. [2] Phil. iii. 3. [3] Psalm xxxii. 1, 2.
[4] Acts v. 31. [5] Acts xx. 21. [6] John iii. 36.

well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man."[1] Now the *slothful* is clearly an unconverted person, as our Lord Himself tells us, in another Parable, "Thou *wicked* and *slothful* servant," says He: and we find him afterwards "cast" as "*unprofitable*" "into outer darkness," where "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."[2] And, therefore, professing Christians are solemnly urged, to "be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises;"[3] implying that those who *are* slothful, have *not* faith and patience, and do *not* inherit the promises: as the contrast is here made between *real* and *temporary* believers, whom he had previously described in the first 8 verses of the same Chapter, and in the figurative language of our Parable itself. While a "man *void of understanding*" is, in Scripture language, "*a fool;*" and such an one is always set forth as an unenlightened and unconverted person: for while it is said, "the wise shall inherit glory," it is also said, that "shame shall be the promotion of fools."[4]

The term "vineyard" here also, as elsewhere, implies that care and pains had been taken by some person or other, at one time or another, in fencing this portion of the "field" off from the remaining portion, for the purpose of cultivation; and that time and labour had necessarily been bestowed upon it, with a view of rendering it fit for the purpose intended. In a figurative sense it might denote a rudimentary Ecclesiastical dealing with the subject typified, so to speak; extending over a greater or less period. Thus when God, as we have seen, constituted "the house of Israel" into a theocracy, the figurative language employed by Him to denote this act, is as follows:—"My well-beloved hath *a vineyard* in a very fruitful hill: and he *fenced it*, and *gathered out the stones thereof* . . . and built a tower in

[1] Prov. xxiv. 30-34.
[2] Mat. xxv. 26, 30.
[3] Heb. vi. 12.
[4] Prov. iii. 25.

the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein."[1] Our Saviour likewise, in similar language, describes the great "Householder," God Himself, as "planting *a vineyard*, and *hedging it round about*, and digging a winepress in it, and building a tower, and letting it out to husbandmen;"[2] when He "committed unto" the Jewish nation the "oracles of God,"[3] and formed them into an Ecclesiastical polity: and the taking of the "vineyard" out of their hands, and the "letting of it unto other husbandmen," is explained to be *the "taking" of "the kingdom of God" from them*, and "the giving of it to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof:" which they had not "rendered" to Him "in their seasons."[4]

So likewise it is clear that this hearer had also been subjected, if I may so say, to some such rudimentary Ecclesiastical dealing as this. Nevertheless a careful consideration of these Scriptures clearly proves that this hearer was evidently an unconverted person; although he might have been brought up in an outwardly religious manner; and upon whose religious education much care and pains had been bestowed. It is clear also that to some extent at least he had been at some time, or it might have been from time to time, under conviction: because the effects produced in him, whatever they were, were produced in him (as in the last hearer,) by the seed sown. It is implied likewise, that the effects of the seed sown in this hearer, lasted longer than in that of the previous one—that it was not in this case, a mere flash in the pan, as it were, only settling down in the end into deeper darkness; but that there had been a struggle, if not a long continued struggle (probably at irregularly recurring intervals,) between sin and conviction, between inclination and duty, between pleasure and religion. However as the heart was destitute of that abiding, sustaining principle, which can alone "overcome the world," even true "faith" in our Lord Jesus Christ,[5] corruption at length

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[1] Isaiah v. 1, 2. [2] Mat. xxi. 33. [3] Rom. iii. 2.
[4] Mat. xxi. 41, 43. [5] 1 John v. 4.

fall among thorns and be choked:" but *not all.* No! OTHER shall fall into good ground, and spring up, and bear fruit, &c. Satan's opposition can have *no effect* upon *God's purposes. These* shall *never* fail. "*All* that the Father *giveth* Me, *shall come* to Me; and Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out."[1] The mode of expression also seems to imply a feeling of relief, if I may so speak, from the consideration of a painful subject, to a feeling of satisfaction at the contemplation of a more pleasing one: just as if He had said again, "Yes: *some* may be lost and die, alas! for them! but *other, other* shall come to maturity and be saved. These! oh! let us look at these, and consider them; let us look at *these*, and love them!"

Now the ground into which this seed fell is here said to be "good ground"—ground good in its nature and character, rich and productive, free from noxious weeds and thorns; and, as Agriculturists say of land in a high state of cultivation, in good condition:—thus symbolising, in the words of the explanation, "an honest and good heart." We are not told, however, *how* this land *had been brought into this condition;* nor *by what means* this heart *had been rendered* honest and good: but as we have already seen that the natural "heart" of the sinner is in Scripture compared to the indurated unbroken rock; and, so far from being pronounced "*good*" *in itself*, is said to be "deceitful above all things and *desperately wicked:*"[2] it is quite clear that this must have been a heart which had been greatly changed from its natural obdurate state—a heart indeed that had been wrought upon by God Himself; and that it must therefore have been expressly fitted and prepared for the reception of the Word, by God the Holy Ghost ("whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken,")[3]—that it was in fact a portion of God's own γεώργιον,[4] or, cultivated field, which He had previously ploughed up, perhaps by affliction, and had thus Himself

[1] John vi. 37.
[2] Jer. xvii. 9.
[3] Acts xvii. 14.
[4] 1 Cor. iii. 9.

expressly prepared and rendered "fit," εὔθετον,[1] for the reception of that seed, which it was His purpose should spring up in it, and bring forth fruit to His glory. It had once been a rock like the rest of the ground, but was now broken up, and transformed into fruitful and productive earth.

And earth newly so formed is often amazingly fruitful and productive. The Rev. C. A. Johns, in his interesting little book, "A Week at the Lizard," speaking of the land in the neighbourhood of the light-houses, says:—"The soil consists of *decomposed* hornblende[2] *rock*, which is so *fertile*, that some land which was enclosed a few years since, was cropped with wheat and barley *for several successive years*, and *bore abundantly without being manured*."[3] Further on he says:—"The *decomposed rock* is called *marle*, and being in many places of great depth, *is carted away as manure* for other less favoured districts."[4] And such evidently was the nature of the ground under consideration: for when the seed "fell on" it, finding a soil so congenial to its nature and development, it germinated at once; it pierced its roots into it," and "sprang up" without hindrance; "and increased and brought forth," "and bare fruit," &c.—phrases signifying, not only a rapid and healthy development, but it "brought forth fruit" *to perfection*, which we are told the former hearers did not, but also that it brought forth fruit *in profusion*—in such profusion indeed, that "some" produced "thirty," "some" "sixty," and "some," even "an hundred fold." That such an increase as "an hundred fold," was not unknown in the land of Canaan; and that it was an evidence of God's blessing, we have the

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[1] Luke ix. 6, 2; xiv. 35; Heb. vi. 7.

[2] Hornblende is a mineral of several varieties, which enters largely into the composition, and forms a constituent part, of several of what Geologists call the Trap rocks, and appears to connect the primary with the volcanic. The prevailing colours are black and green, and its chief constituents are silica, magnesia, and alumina.

[3] "A Week," &c., p. 9. [4] Ibid. p. 9.

testimony of Scripture itself: for we read, "Then Isaac sowed in that land, and *received in the same year* AN HUNDRED FOLD: and Jehovah blessed him."[1] Bayard Taylor also tells us that the soil of California, "even with the imperfect ploughing of the natives, which does little more than scratch the surface of the ground, *produces a hundred fold.*"[2]

Similarly in the explanation we are told, that this hearer, "having heard the Word" "understood it;" he perceived at once, by the help of God's Spirit, its spiritual meaning and application to himself (which it is implied the others had not done); and so understanding it he "received it;" and having once received it, he held it fast, and "kept it;" and, therefore, as a natural consequence, he "bare fruit, and brought forth" "fruit *with patience;*" "some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred."

We are not, however, of course to understand that all this took place at once, without check or hindrance, any more in the spiritual than in the natural world; but that it took place gradually, according to the ordinary course of nature. "The husbandman," it is said, "*waiteth* for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it until he receive the early and the latter rain."[3] "*So is the Kingdom of God,* as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; *first* the blade, *then* the ear, *after that* the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."[4]

So likewise this seed came up gradually, and was gradually brought to perfection. It had its days of sunshine and its days of storm. "When the sun was up," however, it did not "scorch" it, but served only to bring it to maturity: because it was well "rooted and grounded."[5] "The rain"

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[1] Gen. xxvi. 12. [2] "Eldorado," Vol. I., Chap. XIII.
[3] James v. 7. [4] Mark iv. 26-29. [5] Eph. iii. 17.

likewise "came oft upon it," and the "earth" "drank it in," and was refreshed.[1] It had also its days of cloud, and its cold and blighting winds: but when the cold wind blew over it, it did not injure it: for it came when it was well fitted to endure it.

And herein lies a mighty difference between the former hearers and this last hearer of the Word. The very "afflictions" and trials and "tribulations" and "temptations," which "arise for the Word's sake," and which serve to "offend," and to destroy the unstable professor of the Gospel, serve but to fix this hearer more firmly in the truth. When, therefore, "many" of Christ's "disciples go back and walk no more with Him," by reason of some "hard saying," or other, *according to their notion of the thing;* and the Lord turns to these hearers, on the defection of the former ones, with the touching enquiry of, "Will *ye* also go away?" their believing hearts instantly respond with the reply, "Lord *to whom* shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And *we believe* and *are sure* that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."[2] Oh, when the heart has once seen and felt the refreshing beauty and glory of the Lord Jesus, it can never again be fully satisfied with anything short of Him; and it cries out with Lambert, at the stake, "None but Christ, none but Christ!" "I am sure," says Rutherford, in his letter to the Parishioners of Kilmalcolm, "that if new beginners would urge themselves upon Christ, and press their souls upon Him, and importune Him for a draught of His sweet love, they could not come wrong to Christ. Come once in upon the right nick and step of His lovely love, *and I defy you to get free of Him again.* If any beginners *fall off Christ again, and miss Him,* THEY NEVER LIGHTED UPON CHRIST AS CHRIST: *it was but an idol, like Jesus, which they took for Him.*"[3]

Much more might have been said, and indeed ought to have been said, upon these several hearers of the word, and

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[1] Heb. vi. 7. [2] John vi. 60, 66-69.

[3] Bonar's Edition of his Letters, p. 572.

especially upon this last hearer, had I been giving a full exposition of the Parable itself: but as I have already said so much on this subject before, there will be the less need for me to say anything more upon it now; and I would only, therefore, remark, that had we St. Luke's narrative only, we might have inferred, not only that "*one hundredfold*" was, as it would seem to be, *the proper standard* of fruitfulness, but likewise that all attained to it: but a reference to the other two Evangelists shew us that this is not the case; but that a much lower standard is attained in many, if not in the great majority of cases, and is accepted by a gracious and merciful God. We may learn from hence, however, that *one hundredfold is the rule;* and that did all the Lord's people act up to their privileges, and repay all the care and pains bestowed upon them by their Heavenly Father, such a result would invariably be produced. And now then, let us pass on to our next head: which may furnish us with a very powerful reason, why such a blessed result as the above, is not in all cases attained.

III. *The determined opposition of the Adversary to the sowing of the seed itself, as well as to its growth and maturity after it has been sown.*

It will have been observed that each of the three Evangelists employ a different term to denote the Adversary; and these terms, like the description of the ground, on which the seed fell, are *gradational.* The order in which these names are given to the Adversary in the different accounts also show us, (1)the *reason* for Satan's opposition to the truth of God; the *nature* or *character*, of his opposition to it; and *the mode* in which he seeks to carry it out; (2) that it is carried out by him in a *malignant, antagonistic, subtle*, and *deceitful* manner; and (3) that the whole of his mighty intellect, and the full extent of his awful power, and untiring energies, as I have before observed, are thus unceasingly employed by him in carrying out these his hellish designs.[1]

[1] See Chapter II., pp. 26, 27.

As this subject, however, is vastly too extensive to be considered at length in this Section; and I have written a Work upon it, to which I must refer my readers for further information respecting it;[1] I must content myself with simply noting here, that the terms employed by the Evangelists to describe Satan's opposition to the seed sown in the hearts of the hearers, are intended to set forth, not only his ravening eagerness to make away with the effects produced by it upon their hearts, but also the malignant pleasure he enjoys when he thus succeeds in his object. Are poor sinners, therefore, at any time under the sound of the Word, he is at hand to "*catch away*" the seed "*immediately*" it be sown in their hearts; nay, not content that it be "trodden down" and crushed: so fearful is he of anything pertaining to the nature of a seed, that he cannot rest without "*coming immediately*" to "*devour it up;*" and all this "*lest* they should *believe* and be *saved!*" And this again leads me to our last head,

IV. *The prophetical aspect of the subject, when viewed with reference to the bearing of the Parable upon "the field" of "the world" at large.* Viewed in this light, the Jewish nation, *as such*, might be compared to the wayside hearers, who received not "the word of the kingdom," because they "understood it not." They set themselves both against the king and His subjects, and persecuted and rejected both. And this was because, like a frequented way, their hearts had become so hardened against the truth, that that "fowl of the air," Satan, could easily pick up the seeds that were sown among them by Christ and His Apostles, ere they could take root and grow.

The stony ground hearers might shadow forth the inhabitants of Asia Minor, in which churches sprung up with great rapidity, but yet as quickly withered and decayed. Paul himself, who testified of the Galatians, that their love to him at their first planting was such, that "if it had been

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[1] "The Personality and History of Satan," S. W. Partridge & Co., 4s.

possible, they would have plucked out their own eyes, and have given them to him," not many years after, had to address them thus:—"Where is then the blessedness ye spake of?" "Am I therefore become your *enemy*, because I tell you the truth?"[1] And again, "I marvel that ye are *so soon removed* from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another Gospel."[2] While in his second Epistle to his "son Timothy," he complains, in consequence of the "tribulations," that had happened unto him, "*that* ALL *they which are in Asia*" (*i.e.*, Asia Minor) "*be turned away from me.*"[3]

The thorny ground hearers might exemplify the nations of Southern Europe—the inhabitants especially of Greece, and perhaps also of Rome. There the thorns existed in profusion when the seed was sown, and they have never even yet been eradicated. "The pleasures of this life, and the lusts of other things entering in," were to be had in perfection in Greece and Rome; but more especially in Greece. Corinth was a notoriously profligate and immoral city. Paul frequently complains of the carnality of the Corinthian converts;[4] and one of them indeed had openly lapsed into the grossest and most outrageous sin.[5] The same remark likewise applies to his Epistles to the Philippians and Colossians. Christianity is still nominally the religion of these countries, but awfully "choked" up with "thorns," and certainly "bringing *not* fruit unto perfection."

Lastly the good ground hearers might for a time, and in a measure, shadow forth some of the nations of North-West Europe, especially since the Reformation: for these nations are the only nations, which have, *as such*, brought forth fruit to God's glory. The statement likewise of the Parable, that the ground that brought forth fruit, brought it forth in different degrees of fruitfulness, is equally applicable also in this case: for some have been much more fruitful than

[1] Gal. iv. 15, 16. [2] Gal. i. 6. [3] 2 Tim. i. 15.
[4] 1 Cor. iii. 1-4; vi. 1-10, 15-18; xi. 17-34; xv. 12, 35, 36; 2 Cor. xi.; xii. 15, 20, 21, &c. [5] 1 Cor. v.

others; and if any one of them could ever have been said to have brought forth "*a hundredfold*," it surely must have been that nation, which has not only scattered "the seed" of God's Holy Word almost over the face of the whole earth; but has likewise sent forth missionaries to preach the Gospel therein likewise.

And yet, alas! how sad is it to be obliged to add, that this once favoured nation, by her persistent rejection of the truth, and madly following of her idols, is now despising her own mercies; and has become like the "foolish woman" spoken of in the "Proverbs," who is "plucking down her house with her own hands:"[1] for proof of which, see my second volume of "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," chap. vii., Secs. 2 and 3, pp. 360-416 on "The Progress of Jesuitism," and "Spiritualism," &c., &c.

[1] Prov. xiv. 1.

CHAPTER XIII.

EARTH NIGH UNTO CURSING.

"DESCEND, O sinner, to the woe!
Thy day of hope is done;
Light shall revisit thee no more,
Life with its sanguine dreams is o'er,
Love reaches not yon awful shore;
For ever sets thy sun.

. . . . . .

"Thy songs are at an end; thy harp
Shall solace thee no more;
All mirth has perish'd on thy grave,
The melody that could not save
Has died upon death's sullen wave
That flung thee on this shore.

"Earth, with its waves and woods and winds,
Its stars and suns and streams,
Its joyous air and gentle skies,
Fill'd with all happy memories,
Has pass'd, or, with dark memories,
Comes back in torturing dreams.

. . . . . .

"No God is there; no Christ; for He,
Whose word on earth was COME,
Hath said DEPART; go, lost one, go,
Reap the sad harvest thou didst sow,
Join yon lost angels in their woe,
Their prison is thy home."

"All things hang on our possessing
God's free love, and grace, and blessing,
Though all earthly wealth depart;
He who God for his hath taken,
'Mid the changing world unshaken
Keeps a free heroic heart.

"He Who hitherto hath fed me,
And to many a joy hath led me,
Is, and shall be, ever mine;
He Who did so gently school me,
He Who still doth guide and rule me,
Will not leave me now to pine.

. . . . . .

"Well He knows how best to grant me
All the longing hopes that haunt me;
All things have their proper day:
I would dictate to Him never,
As God wills, so be it ever,
When He wills, I will obey.

"If on earth He bids me linger,
He will guide me with His finger
Through the years that now look dim.
All that earth has fleets and changes,
As a river onward ranges,
But I rest in peace on Him."

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have d of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to , if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open e. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth ing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we ersuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, gh we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work labour of love, which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have stered to the saints, and do minister."—HEB. vi. 4-10.

THE former part of the above passage of Scripture, relates he third hearer in the parable of the Sower, and is an lification of what is there said of him. It is the destion of such a hearer, with added gifts and illuminations. is pourtrayed again in the Parable of the ten virgins, as who went out to meet the Bridegroom, having oil only is lamp, and none in his vessel.[1] We see him again in

See my Exposition of this Parable in my 2nd vol. of "Outlines of hetic Truth," Chap. vii., Sec. 1, pp. 343-349.

Matt. vii. 21-23, where our Lord utters these warning words concerning such an one. "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His."[1] And since He expressly says, that He *never* knew *these*, it is clear that they *never were* His, notwithstanding their miraculous powers and gifts. For the Scriptures plainly teach us, that the Spirit may be *on* a man for gifts, and yet not *in* him for grace.[2] Only in the persons mentioned in the text, there is added the awful guilt of apostacy besides. Therefore, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."[3]

I mentioned in the Preface to my First Volume of "The Hidden Mystery," that my Exposition upon Heb. vi. 4-8, which is now out of print, arose out of this Treatise when in embryo, as well as my Exposition of the Parable of the Sower. I shall, therefore, in this Chapter, give an Epitome of the former Treatise, with added particulars, in order to complete the subject, as I gave an Epitome of that on the Parable of the Sower, in the last Chapter.

Let us consider, then, in the first place, *the character* of the persons here spoken of. *They "were once enlightened,"* ἅπα φωτισθέντας. We have the same verb made use of in Eph. i. 18—"the eyes of your understanding being enlightened." It occurs again in Heb. x. 32—"But call to mind the former days in which, after ye were illuminated," φωτισθέντες, "ye endured a great fight of afflictions." And

[1] 2 Tim. ii. 19.

[2] See in proof the following Scriptures, 1 Sam. x. 6; xix. 23, 24; Num. xxiv. 2; John xi. 49-53.

[3] 2 Tim. ii. 19.

in John i. 9, this illumination is expressly ascribed to Christ Himself, Who is called "the True Light, which lighteth," φωτιζει, "every man that cometh into the world," *i.e.*, Who was sent into the world for that purpose. The passage is, therefore, somewhat equivalent to that in the 26th verse of the 10th Chapter of this same Epistle—"after that we have received the knowledge of the truth;" and the enlightenment there spoken of seems to consist in the communication of spiritual knowledge to the understanding by the Spirit of Christ; which may or may not influence the heart likewise. Thus we have a Balaam in the Old Testament, who is described as "the man whose eyes were open;"[1] and who could so far see the blessedness of "the righteous," as to desire that he might "die" his "death," and that his "last end might be like his;"[2] but who was, nevertheless, wholly unrenewed and unconverted: for he still "loved the wages of unrighteousness,"[3] and gave that devilish counsel to Balak "to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication:"[4] and "his end was according to his works."[5] And we have a Simon Magus, likewise in the New Testament, who was similarly enlightened, and similarly unconverted.[6]

They "have tasted of the heavenly gift." Some understand this of the special gift of the Holy Spirit, Who is, in Acts viii. 20, called the "gift of God"—the Holy Ghost being in Scripture often said to be "received," and being expressly called a "gift" in Acts ii. 38, and x. 45. But this would make the Apostle mention this subject twice, and in two successive clauses. I regard the passage, therefore, as referring to Jesus Christ, Who expressly styles Himself the "gift of God;"[7] and "by" Whom Paul tells us came "the gift of grace," which is a Hebraism for "the gracious gift," or unmerited gift of His "righteousness."[8] "For He gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver

[1] Num. xxiv. 3, 4, 15, 16. [2] Num. xxiii. 10. [3] 2 Pet. ii. 15. [4] Rev. ii. 14.
[5] 2 Cor. xi. 15; Num. xxxi. 8; Josh. xiii. 22. [6] Acts viii. 13, 18-24.
[7] John iv. 10. [8] Rom. v. 15, 17.

us from this present evil age, according to the will of God even our Father. To Whom be glory for ever. Amen."[1] Hence the Apostle also calls Him God's "unspeakable gift."[2]

And that passage in the 6th of John throws much light upon this subject. "Labour not for the meat which perisheth," said our Lord to the unbelieving Jews, "but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall *give* unto you: for Him hath God the Father sealed. Then said they unto Him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye *believe* on Him Whom He hath sent. They said therefore unto Him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe Thee? What dost Thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written, He *gave* them bread from heaven to *eat*. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven, but My Father *giveth* you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He Which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."[3]

And the tasting mentioned in the passage under review implies a very slight acquaintance with the subject-matter of its experience, as the Apostle intimates, when he says, "therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let *us* go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,"[4] &c. Hence the Psalmist says, "O *taste* and see that Jehovah is good:" for, says he, "*Blessed* is the man that *trusteth* in Him."[5] So likewise the Apostle Peter says of some young converts, "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."[6] "If so be!" εἴπερ—if indeed! a phrase implying the assumption of the supposition as true.

Tasting is, however, very different from eating and drinking. There may be a tasting to reject, as here: but

[1] Gal. i. 4, 5. [2] 2 Cor. ix. 15. [3] John vi. 27-33.
[4] Heb. vi. i. [5] Psa. xxxiv. 8. [6] 1 Pet. ii. 3.

it is eating and drinking which can alone really nourish and benefit. Hence our Lord in that same chapter in John, where He speaks of Himself as "the heavenly gift," also discourses largely upon the mode of our becoming partakers of it. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that *believeth* on Me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may *eat* thereof, and *not die*. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man *eat* of this bread, he shall *live for ever;* and the bread that I will *give* is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."[1] And again, "verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye *eat*" (not *taste* merely) "the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, *hath eternal life*, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that *eateth* My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that *eateth* Me shall live by Me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that *eateth* of this bread shall *live for ever*."[2] Hence we see that the real *eater* of "the bread from heaven" —the "heavenly gift"—is "faithful and beloved," and is a real "partaker of the benefit."[3] He truly "believes" in Christ, he "*lives* by the faith of the Son of God, who loved him, and *gave* Himself for him,"[4] he "*hath* eternal life," and, therefore, "shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life:"[5] but the *taster*, I mean the *mere* taster and rejecter, is in a fearfully different position, as we shall see.

"*And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost.*" There are two receptions of the Holy Ghost spoken of in Scripture; the one, respecting His regenerating and sanctifying grace;

[1] John vi. 47-51. [2] John vi. 53-58. [3] 1 Tim. vi. 2.
[4] Gal. ii. 20. [5] John v. 24.

and the other, respecting His miraculous powers and gifts. The reception of the Holy Ghost as a regenerator and sanctifier, is never predicated in Scripture but of real believers. The reception of the Holy Ghost, as a dispenser of miraculous powers and gifts; that is, the reception from Him of those powers and gifts, with the ability to exercise them, is predicated of believers, and illuminated unbelievers, indiscriminately. Thus we read when the Samaritans "*believed* Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women;" and "when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria *had received the word of God*, they sent unto them Peter and John, who, when they were come down, prayed for them *that they might receive the Holy Ghost:* (for as yet *He was fallen upon none of them;* only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and *they received the Holy Ghost.*"[1] So in a subsequent Chapter we read, "While Peter spake these words," *i.e.*, to "Cornelius the Centurion" and to them "that were come together," "*the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word.* And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was *poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.* For they heard them *speak with tongues and magnify God.*"[2]

Again, on another occasion, "Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain *disciples*, he said unto them, Have ye *received the Holy Ghost* since ye *believed?* And they said unto him, We have not yet heard whether the Holy Ghost be (given), *ἀλλ' οὐδὲ εἰ πνεῦμα ἅγιόν ἐστιν* (*δεδόμενον*) *ἠκούσαμεν*;" i.e., whether the time foretold by Joel has arrived.[3] "And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John

[1] Acts viii. 12, 14-17. [2] Acts x. 44-46.

[3] The same phrase occurs in John vii. 39, which fully explains this, and shews that the above is the real meaning of this passage.

verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him Which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, *the Holy Ghost came on them;* and they *spake with tongues and prophesied.*"[1] From all which examples it is evident that the reception of the Holy Ghost here spoken of is chiefly confined to the reception of His extraordinary powers and gifts. And it matters not whether these were believers or not (although it is by no means certain that they *all* were); for that *such* a reception of the Holy Ghost may be partaken of by *unbelievers*, is clear from the testimony of our Lord in Matt. vii. 21-23, which I have already referred to, as well as from many other passages of Scripture. Indeed, when our Lord chose His *twelve* disciples, it is expressly said that "He gave *them* power against unclean spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease."[2] And albeit we have not the miraculous gifts of the Spirit now, yet we have the ordinary gifts of the Spirit still, which may be received in the same way.

"*And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.*" There are two phrases employed in Scripture to designate "the Word of God." One is ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, and the other is, ῥῆμα Θεοῦ. The former is the more comprehensive, and the latter the more restricted phrase. The former generally signifies either the whole revealed Word of God, as embodied in His commands to mankind; or the Gospel in its entirety. The latter generally denotes either some particular command of God; or the Gospel in some special aspect, so to speak, of its character. As examples of the former, we may note the following under the first division, Mark vii. 13; Luke viii. 21; xi. 28; John x. 35; 1 Cor. xiv. 36; 1 Tim. iv. 5; Rev. i. 2. As examples under the second division might be noted Luke

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[1] Acts xix. 1-6. [2] Mat. x. 1.

v. 1; Acts viii. 14; xi. 1; xiii. 44. The word λόγος likewise occurs in the following passages, Luke viii. 11; John viii. 37; Acts iv. 31; vi. 7; xiii. 46; xix. 20; Rom. ix. 6; 2 Cor. ii. 17; iv. 2; Col. i. 25; 1 Thes. ii. 13; 2 Tim. ii. 9; Titus ii. 5; Heb. iv. 12; xiii. 7; 1 Pet. i. 23; 1 John ii. 14; Rev. i. 9; vi. 9; xx. 4.

As examples of the latter phrase, in its primary meaning, I might refer to the following passages, Luke iii. 2; John iii. 34; viii. 37; Heb. xi. 3; compared with Psalm xxxiii. 9. As examples under the second head, we have, Luke iv. 4; Rom. x. 8, 17; Acts v. 20. The word ῥῆμα occurs likewise in John vi. 63, 68; xv. 7; xvii. 8; Acts vi. 11, 13; x. 22, 37, 44; xi. 16; Eph. v. 26; vi. 17; Heb. i. 3; xii. 19; 1 Pet. i. 25.[1]

From the word ῥῆμα, therefore, having been employed in this passage instead of the word λόγος, and from its having been further designated as "good," *i.e.*, *to the taster*, as tasting good; and being coupled with "the powers of the world to come," I apprehend "the good word of God" here does not refer to the Gospel in its entirety, *i.e.*, that the person here spoken of truly believed in it, but to the Gospel in some specialty, so to speak, of its character. "The good word of God," means here, therefore, I think, the sweet and comforting portion of the Gospel, as bringing glad tidings of good things; and refers to the promises of God in the Gospel—the promises of heaven, eternal life, and everlasting blessedness, etc.; to Gospel privileges, in fact, and Gospel blessings—the word ῥῆμα having the signification of *promise*

[1] There are some exceptions to the above; as in Eph. vi. 17, compared with Heb. iv. 12; in the first of which passages ῥῆμα is the word used, and in the second λόγος: but perhaps the meaning to be eliminated from the passages might be, that *the entire word* is a sword and *every part of it*, so to speak, likewise. With this view, see Mat. iv. 4, 7, 10, as examples of the use of this particular sword, and where likewise the word ῥῆμα is used. See also 1 Pet. i. 23, 25, in the first of which verses λόγος is the word employed, and in the second, ῥῆμα. See also Rev. xvii. 17, where the word λόγος is made use of: but here no doubt the word refers to *the entire revelation of God on the particular subject*, to which reference is made.

in Luke ii. 29. And this again, coupled with the word "*tasted,*" which has been before considered, helps us further to understand the reason of the second hearer in the Parable of the Sower having received the word *with joy*—λόγον being the word employed there as denoting the Gospel *generally*, because it was assumed that he had embraced it, and was a believer in it, until the contrary was shewn to be the fact[1]—because his mind was fixed, as it were, wholly upon God's *promises* in it, and *the blessings* consequent upon the reception of it; and the reason likewise why he fell off; because he had not considered the obligation which the reception of the Word thus laid upon him. He expected everything *from* God, but had no heart to do anything *for* God himself. Indeed, this he had not considered; and so when "affliction arose for the Word's sake,"[2] he was offended immediately, and fell away at once. We have a good illustration of such a character in the case of Pliable in the "Pilgrim's Progress."

"*The powers of the world to come.*" Man in his natural state is very little, if indeed at all affected by any consideration of "the world to come." All his thoughts, his projects, his aspirations, and his hopes, respect "the world that now is"[3] alone; and he practically acts as if there would be none other. When, however, his conscience has been awakened, either by some awful judgment, or the setting forth of the word, like Felix he "trembles;"[4] and when the Spirit, in a measure draws aside some of the vails that hang upon his spirit, and hide eternity from his view—and more especially when he illuminates his understanding, he begins to perceive that there *is* a "world to come;" and he begins likewise to experience something of its awful reality, as well as its "powers" upon his conscience. Now this feeling may be but temporary, as in the case of the persons referred to in the passage under review, and may, through a man's

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[1] See Luke viii. 13; Acts viii. 13, 23. [2] Mark iv. 17.
[3] 2 Pet. iii. 7. [4] Acts xxiv. 25.

obstinacy and resistance of the truth, die away and be dissipated for the present; or it may, as in the case of the truly quickened soul, be deep and settled, and may end in a fixed and abiding impression, which, under the teaching of God's Spirit, will lead to his saving conversion to God. It may be a *tasting* and rejecting till its after powers are felt to be a torment for ever; or it may issue in an acting upon it in life as a mighty and powerful truth, which will issue in everlasting felicity.[1]

And now let us consider *the conduct* of the persons spoken of in this passage, and *the result* of their conduct.

"*If they shall fall away,*" *καὶ παραπεσόντας*, meaning "those who have fallen away," or, apostatized. The word *παραπίπτω* here employed is a compound word, and is derived from the verb *πίπτω*, to fall, and *παρά*, near, or near by. In composition, however, *παρά* frequently, as here, implies a swerving from the true point, a coming short of it, a going beyond it, like the English syllabic prefix, *mis*—*i.e.*, wrongly, falsely; and the compounded word signifies, to fall aside from, to swerve or deviate from any thing; hence in the New Testament it signifies to fall away, *i.e.*, from the path of duty, from the faith, to apostatize. This being the only place in the New Testament, however, where the verb occurs, we have no parallel passages wherewith to compare it: but the compound substantive, *παραπτώμα*, which frequently occurs, settles the question for us. It occurs, for instance, in the following, among other passages, Rom. iv. 25; v. 17; xi. 11, 12; 2 Cor. v. 19; Eph. i. 7; ii. 1, 5; Col. ii. 13.

And by so doing, "*they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.*" These words afford further evidence that "the heavenly gift" refers to Christ, rather than to the Holy Spirit: otherwise, we have nothing in the former description of the charactor spoken of, which is placed in opposition to this phrase: but if it be

[1] Heb. xi. 8-10, 13-16, &c.

understood in the above sense, the parallelism is complete in both cases. Thus the "taster" of "the heavenly gift," turning rejecter, becomes the "crucifier to himself of the Son of God afresh;" and the "taster of the powers of the world to come," turning resister, becomes "earth" unrained upon, "bearing thorns and briers," the natural product of his barren unproductive heart.

Now as "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures;"[1] and sin was thus the procuring cause, so to speak, of His crucifixion; and "they that are Christ's" are said to have "crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts;"[2] it follows, as a necessary consequence of these truths, that every wilful and deliberate sin committed by a professing Christian, is, in a measure, a "crucifying to himself of the Son of God afresh:" for it is a deliberate aiding and abetting of that which crucified Christ, and a giving up, therefore, necessarily of all interest in Him. It is a selling of oneself, as it were, to the Devil, to work unrighteousness, and a siding with Satan, and fighting under his accursed banners, against the Blessed Jesus, Who came to "destroy the works of the devil:"[3] if it does not comprehend in it also a tacit acquiesence in the justice of Christ's punishment, and that He deserved the death He died. Moreover, as this Epistle was addressed to Hebrews, and a denial of Christ by Hebrews would be tantamount to a rejection of Him as an impostor, this passage, *quoad* them, may mean more. It may mean that the persons so acting have a bitter and deadily hostility to Christ and His Gospel, and so act *ex animo; i.e.*, that so far as they themselves are concerned they would have crucified Him, if not, would also re-crucify Him, if they could; as they did it to His members—as also the apostate Julian did in a former age, and as the Papists have done; and still would do, if they could, in these days.

"*And put Him to an open shame.*" Every wilful sin committed by a professing Christian in the open sight of

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 3. [2] Gal. v. 24. [3] 1 John iii. 8.

others, is a putting of Christ to open shame, inasmuch as the act is a deliberate declaration *on his part* that Christ's service is consistent with indulgence in sin—that He is not careful whether His disciples be holy or not, nay, that He is in league with Beelzebub, and that He is "the minister of sin"[1] Himself. Indeed "sin in the children of God," as the Rev. Marcus Rainsford truly said, in a speech at St. James's Hall, in January, 1875, "is an *awful* thing. I believe solemnly," said he, "I do not merely say I believe, I am perfectly satisfied, that the devil is not guilty of the sin that a child of God is guilty of. Has the devil sinned against the Father that gave His only begotten Son to die for him? or against the Holy Ghost the Comforter come down to tabernacle and temple in him? In Ezekiel xvi. 48, I read, 'As I live, saith the Lord, Sodom, thy sister, hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters.' Such is the enormity of sin as committed by the child of God!"

In the extended sense, the phrase we have last referred to would no doubt apply, as in this case, to those who act with the avowed intent and object of vilifying and dishonouring Christ, and putting Him to an open shame.

And what does the Apostle predicate of the class of persons whom we have been considering? He says, "*It is impossible to renew them unto repentance;*" and that for the reasons before given. "It is impossible," not of course in respect of God's absolute and almighty power; but in respect of any created power in others, or in themselves. It is justly, and by right, impossible, because contrary to His declared will and purpose, by which His power is limited; so that He will never do it, or suffer it to be done: for "He cannot deny Himself."[2]

"*To renew,*" ἀνακαινίζειν, "*them to repentance.*" Ἀνακαινίζω signifies to rebuild decayed edifices, metaphorically, to restore to a former state; and as the Apostle had before spoken of

[1] Gal. ii. 17.

[2] 2 Tim. ii. 13. See Chap. xi. 6; Mat. vii. 18, 21-23; xii. 31-33.

"leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ," and "going on unto perfection; *not laying again the foundation of repentance* from dead works, and of *faith* toward God;" he here asserts, speaking metaphorically, that in the event of this seeming building being pulled down, or irreparably injured, it would be utterly impossible in *any* case for *man* to restore it. Hence he says, in another place, "If *I* build again the things which I destroyed"—the old building of nature having been devoted to destruction as an incurably leprous house[1]—"I make myself a transgressor."[2] In another passage, however, this same Apostle urges the "brethren, if a man be overtaken in a transgression," *παραπτώματι*, "to restore," *καταρτίζετε*, "such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."[3] Here *καταρτίζω* signifies literally to set right, metaphorically to restore; and the metaphor is taken from the resetting of a broken limb, there being an allusion to the erring member of Christ's body, who lies, like David, after his fall, groaning in anguish, on account of his broken bones.[4] Such a *παραπτώμα* as this, therefore, we see that we can, under God, be the means of healing, as we are commanded to do so; but not such an one as is mentioned in our text: for this is wholly beyond our power. The case is utterly hopeless so far as man is concerned: for this is a rebuilding, as it were, altogether; and one wholly beyond all ordinary means. This man has known the truth, and rejected it; and it now falls powerless on a withered heart. Hence this same Apostle says, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."[5] This passage throws much light upon the one we are considering: for it shews us that it is not *every* wilful sin, or every grievous fall into sin that is impardonable; but the falling away here spoken of is an

[1] Lev. xiv. 43-45. [2] Gal. ii. 18. [3] Gal. vi. 1.
[4] Psa. li. 8. [5] Heb. x. 26. 27.

absolute falling away from, and a denial of the Gospel of remission of sins by Christ; and it must be done openly, in the view of all the world, and persisted in; and such persons are, therefore, shut up in final impenitency and hardness of heart. And, alas! there are more of such persons in the world than is generally supposed.

I shall now, therefore, as is my wont, as briefly as possible, give some sad cases in point.

The first was that of a very talented and intellectual person, who had naturally a wonderfully clear apprehension of things; and who, when the Gospel was brought before him, seemed to see it as with a sunbeam, and at once made a profession of it. For a time he appeared to walk uprightly, and gave addresses in his own house, and was, I believe, made instrumental in the conversion of one person, if not more. After a while, however, the world seemed to gain ascendancy over him; and, being naturally of a pleasure-loving turn of mind, and being very much sought after in what is called Society, he ultimately threw off all profession of religion, and become a thorough worldling. The result was that he threw away all his bright prospects in life, and brought his family to ruin and disgrace, and had to leave the country altogether. Now I sought an opportunity of speaking to him; and the following is the result of our sad interview.

After having set his fearful backslidings before him, and urged and entreated him to return to the Lord, in deep humiliation and confession of his sin; with earnest entreaties to Him for forgiveness and restoration, he admitted everything I said, but without the slightest feeling or concern, nay, almost in a spirit of levity.

"Nobody can tell me anything I don't know," he said; "*I'm out of the Covenant. I am a dead man. There is no life in me.*"

"Then why, oh why," said I, "do you not earnestly plead with the Lord to be healed of your backslidings, and to be restored to God's favour and likeness?"

"Because *I don't want,*" he said, "*I have no desire to return.*"

"Ah!" I rejoined, "you little know the awful conflict that has to rend and tear your spirit!"

"Yes, I do," he said, "I know it as well as you do. I know it must be tremendous; and, therefore, I don't care to think about it."

"But," I urged, "it will have to come; and, therefore, why not, oh! why not retrace your steps, and earnestly call upon the Lord to restore you *now!*"

"I tell you," said he, "because I don't want, and I can't."

"Oh! what a dreadful state," I exclaimed, "to be in! Then have you no fears, no distress of mind, no misery, no anguish of spirit, or bitterness of heart?"

"*None whatever,*" said he, "*I can't feel. I'm hard and dead!*"

"Then have you *never* had any such feelings?"

"No, never."

"Then how could you get into such a state without—had you no suggestions of conscience, no warnings, no rebukes? How did you fall?"

"Oh!" said he carelessly, "I gradually slipped into it, and fell away almost without knowing it." And, alas! I could get no farther with him.

The sequel must be told. He left England for a distant colony; again threw away every fresh opportunity, lost his wife and children, and died about thirty years afterwards a pauper at an Inn; having only a short time before been engaged in writing some critiques upon some play-actors! dying, alas! it is to be feared, as he had lived all those years, without God.

My next case is from a narrative by the Rev. Hubbard Winslow, of America, which I have given *in extenso* in my book on Hebrews vi. 4-8, but which I shall here greatly curtail. "A young man," he says, "left his father's house in the country at the age of fifteen. He had a pious mother,

and had been the subject of early religious instructions and impressions." Subsequently "he formed an acquaintance with associates less favourable to piety, with whom his feelings gradually learned to sympathize. He went on in this way for four or five years without much obvious change, though he was, of course, resisting convictions, hardening his heart, and laying the foundation for his moral ruin." "He at length began to visit rather freely the theatre, and other dissipating amusements and pleasures." "About this time he fell in with some sceptical writings." "He first read, then doubted, then began to be more wise than all his teachers; and at length slid quite over into the yawning gulf!" Mr. Winslow was sent by some friends to visit him when on his dying bed. "He was now," he says, "in his twenty-sixth year. For nearly five years he had been, as he supposed, a confirmed infidel." "He felt that he had ruined himself. He saw clearly where the work of ruin commenced; it was in his resisting his early convictions of truth and duty."

"After a gust of emotion, which for a moment suspended his utterance, he proceeded: 'It was not infidelity that ruined him; the procuring cause of his ruin lay farther back. *It was his resisting the admonitions of God, and the striving of His Spirit*, that made him an infidel; but his infidelity had served to plunge him into more open and desperate iniquities.'" "'But these,' continued he, 'are only the warts and excrescences of my ruined character, the ruin itself is deep in the soul, and the misery with which it is overtaken here is only premonitory of the everlasting misery which awaits it beyond the grave. For several years I have tried to disbelieve the Bible. I have succeeded, *I have been a confirmed infidel. More than that, I have been an atheist.* I used to hear it said that no man could be really an atheist; but I know to the contrary. I have been an atheist, I have perfectly and fatally succeeded in being given over to a strong delusion to believe a lie, that I might be damned, because I obeyed not the truth, but had pleasure

in unrighteousness. But I am no longer an atheist, I am convinced that there is a God. I feel, I know that I am an accountable being; and that a righteous judgment awaits me in eternity!' "

"I here endeavoured to cast oil upon the rising waves of emotion, and to calm his tempestuous spirit, by reminding him of the great mercy and forgiveness of God. 'No,' replied he, 'not for me, I cannot be forgiven, and *I cannot repent, my day of grace is all over.*' 'I have not known one hour of peace since I left the paths of virtue, and for two or three years I have been perfectly wretched. I have often been on the point of committing suicide.' After a few words intended to direct his mind to the source of hope, I left him, promising to see him again the next morning, if he should survive till then. He did survive—the morning came, but it was no morning to him." "The following conversation took place on the occasion now referred to:—

"'How do you do, my friend, this morning?'

"'As miserable as sin and wrath can make me.'

"'And did you obtain no rest last night?'

"'Not a moment's rest; *my soul has been in perfect misery.*'

"'But you are excited; your body is diseased, and your mind is weak and morbid. You ought to endeavour to compose yourself to rest, to become calm, and to look to that source of forgiveness and mercy which is still open to you, if you repent and believe.'

"'No, no, it is impossible! I cannot compose myself, I cannot be calm, my body is well enough, but *my soul has been in hell all night.* I have denied that there is a hell: I have scoffed at it; I have induced others to do the same, and now God is convincing me of my error. Oh, I know now that there is a hell; I feel it in my own spirit.'

"'It is well for you to acknowledge your sins. But you should confess to God, as well as to your fellow-men. He

has said, "Acknowledge thy trangressions;" and moreover, "He that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall find mercy."'

"'No, no, I cannot approach God, I cannot meet Him, I cannot!' 'I never before realized the meaning of that Scripture, "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish." All my expectations have perished. I have been for some time reviewing my past life, and during the last night, that passage kept passing like a burning arrow through my spirit, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Yes, I have walked in the way of my heart, and in the sight of my eyes, and now God is bringing me into judgment.' 'You can pray for me, but it is of no use. You are very kind; the family here are very kind; I thank you all, but you cannot save me. *My soul is damned! the seal of reprobation is already upon me!*' These last were precisely his words; and they were uttered with a pathos, a sort of calm, fixed, significant earnestness, which almost overcame us. I can never forget his expression, when he fixed his dark, restless, glassy eyes upon us and uttered these last words." "The next day" "he died."

Passing over the dreadful case of John Childs, who for near twenty years "consorted with the Baptists," in the days of John Bunyan, and "for divers years, at seasons, exercised himself in preaching" among them; but who afterwards apostatized, and wrote books against the Calvinists—subsequently confessing, when the wrath of God was poured out upon him, that "he wrote in malice, and by the instigation of the devil," and that he had been a hypocrite all his life—and who at last hung himself; I come to the case of Francis Spira: who was the original of Bunyan's man in the iron-cage in his "Pilgrim's Progress." I have detailed this case at some length in my book on Hebrews vi. 4-8; but I shall only give an abbreviated account of it here.

Francis Spira was an advocate in the town of Citadella, in Italy, at the time of the Reformation. He made a profession of the Gospel in the year 1548, "ever pressing," as his narrative records, "this maine point, that we must wholly and only depend on the free and unchangeable love of God in the death of Christ, as the only sure way to salvation: and this was the summe of all his discourse, and this continued for the space of sixe years, or thereabouts."[1] These things coming to the ears of John Casa, the Pope's Legate, resident at Venice, had Spira apprehended; whereupon, under threat of persecution, he promised "to acknowledge the whole Doctrine of the Church of Rome to bee holy and true, and to abjure the opinions of Luther, and other such Teachers, as false and hereticall: *Man knowes the beginnings of sinne, but who bounds the issues thereof?* Spira having once lost footing goes downe amaine, he cannot stay."[2] And so on the day appointed, "he desperately enters into the publique congregation, where masse being finished, in the presence of friends and enemies, and of the whole Assembly; being by estimation neere two thousand people; yea, and of heaven itselfe, he recites that infamous abjuration, word for word as it was written: it being done, he was fined thirty pieces of gold, which he presently paid; . . . . then was he sent home restored to his dignities, goods, wife, and children: no sooner was hee departed, but hee thought hee heard a direfull voyce, saying to him, *Thou wicked wretch, thou hast denied mee, thou hast renounced the covenant of thy obedience, thou hast broken thy vow, hence Apostate, beare with thee the sentence of thy eternall damnation;* hee, trembling and quaking in body and mind, fell down in a swoune; relief was at hand for the body, but *from that time forwards he never found any peace or ease of*

[1] A Relation of the Fearefull Estate of Francis Spira, in the year 1548. London: Printed by I. L. for Phil. Stephens and Christoph. Meredith, at the Golden Lyon, in Paul's Church Yard, 1638, pp. 8, 9.

[2] Ibid., pp. 25-31.

his minde; but continuing in uncessant torments, he professed that he was captived under the revenging hand of the great God: that hee heard continually that fearfull sentence of Christ, that just judge; that hee knew he was utterly undone: that hee could neither hope for grace, nor Christ's intercession with God the Father in his behalfe: thus was his fault ever heavy on his heart, and ever his judgment before his eyes."[1]

His friends striving to comfort him by "propounding many of God's promises recorded in Scripture, and many examples of God's mercy, he replied, "It is true hee would have all that hee hath elected to be saved; he would not have damned reprobates to be saved; I am one of that number; *I know it, for I willingly, and against my knowledge denied Christ; and I feele that hee hardens and will not suffer me to hope.* After some silence, one asked him whether hee did not believe that Doctrine (to be true), for which he was accused before the Legate; hee answered, I did believe it when I denied it, but now I neither believe that, nor the doctrine of the Romane Church; *I believe nothing, I have no faith, no trust, no hope; I am a Reprobate like Cain, or Judas,* who, casting away all hope of mercy, fell into despair."[2] Some of his friends desiring to comfort him with that passage of Scripture, 1 Sam. ii. 6, which speaks of God "bringing down to hell, and raising up:" "This is the work (quoth Spira), this the labour; for I tell you, when I at Venice did first abjure my profession, and so, as it were, drew an Indenture, the Spirit of God oft admonisht me; and when at Citadella, I did, as it were, set to my Seale; the Spirit of God often suggested to mee, Doe not write, Spira, doe not Seale; *yet I resisted the Holy Ghost, and did both:* AND AT THAT VERY PRESENT I DID EVIDENTLY FEEL A WOUND INFLICTED IN MY VERY WILL, so that although I can say, I would believe, yet can I not say, I wil believe; God hath denied me the power of will;

[1] Relation, pp. 40-46. [2] Ibid., pp. 59-63.

and it befals me, in this my miserable estate, as with one that is fast in irons, and his friends coming to see him, do pitie his estate, and do persuade him to shake off his fetters, and to come out of his bonds, which God knows hee would faine do, but cannot, *this is my very case;* you persuade me to believe, how faine would I doe it, but cannot? *O now, I cannot!*"[1]

I cannot go through, as Bunyan puts it, "all the rest of his actions in his dolours, as his tears, his prayers, his gnashing of teeth, his wringing of hands, his twisting, and languishing, and pining away under that mighty hand of God that was upon him:"[2] suffice it to say, that "hee lay about eight weeks in this case, in a continuall burning, neither desiring, nor receiving anything but by force, and that without digestion, so spent that hee appeared a perfect Anatomie, expressing to the view, nothing but sinewes and bones; vehemently raging for drinke; ever pining, yet fearfull to live long; dreadful of hell, yet coveting death; in a continual torment, yet his own tormentour; and thus consuming himselfe with grief, and horrour, impatience, and despair; like a living man in hell, hee represented an extraordinary example of the justice and power of God: and thus (as farre as appeareth) within a few dayes after his arrival at his own home, he departed this present life. Yet an occasion to make us remember that secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but charitie to man, to teach him to hope all things."[3]

It was no doubt to such cases as these that our Lord referred, when He said, "He that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven."[4] And there is of course a vast difference between a soul hurried into sin by

[1] Relation, pp. 94-97.
[2] See his "Grace abounding to the chief of sinners."
[3] Relation, pp. 175-177. [4] Luke xii. 9, 10.

the force of temptation, and one sinning deliberately, and of set purpose, against light and knowledge, and the forcible admonitions and warnings of the Spirit of the living God: neither is it always possible for the most practised believer to distinguish accurately between the two. Nevertheless, when unhappily any real child of God so far falls, as to *seem* in any measure, to come under the description of the persons here spoken of, as some, alas! have done:[1] yet, however severely God may deal with him for his sin and folly, He will not utterly reject him and cast him off, but will ultimately renew him to repentance, and restore him to His favour: for, however other relationships to God may fail, *the relationship to God in Christ can never fail!*[2] For thus run the terms of the new Covenant of Grace: "Incline your ear, and come unto Me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an *Everlasting Covenant* with you, even *the sure mercies* of David."[3] And what are these? "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and My covenant *shall stand fast with him.*" "If his children forsake My law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break My statutes, and keep not my commandments: then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. *Nevertheless My loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail.* MY COVENANT WILL I NOT BREAK, *nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips.* Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David."[4] "Therefore it is of faith," saith the Apostle, "that it might be *by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed;* not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all."[5] And, therefore, we have this same Apostle, in this

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[1] See and compare Mat. xxvi. 69-75; and Mark xiv. 66-72, with John xxi. 15-19. See also Acts xxvi. 10, 11; and compare 1 Cor. v. with 2 Cor. ii. 1-8.

[2] John i. 12, 13; Rom. viii. 14-17, 28-39; Gal. iv. 6, 7; Eph. i. 3-6: 1 John iii. 1, 2, &c.

[3] Isa. lv. 3. [4] Psa. lxxxix. 28-35. [5] Rom. iv. 16.

y Chapter asserting in the most positive and absolute ns the immutability of God's counsel with regard to His sen people in Christ Jesus. "Wherein God," says he, illing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath; t by two immutable things," *i.e.*, the promise and the h of God, "in which it was impossible for God to lie, we ght have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which ereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner or us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever r the order of Melchisedec."[1]

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[1] Heb. vi. 17-20.

CHAPTER XIV.

EARTH NIGH UNTO CURSING—continued.

"Come, ye backsliding sons of God,
(For many such there are)
Who long the paths of sin have trod,
Come, cast away despair:
Return to Jesus Christ, and see
There's mercy still for such as we.

"True, we cannot pretend to much
Of usefulness or fruit;
But yet, the love of Christ is such
We still retain the root,
Returning prodigals shall find,
Though they are base, their Father's kind.

"They who have never gone astray
Since first the Lord they knew,
Walk in a much more pleasant way,
While we our folly rue:
But though we seem to differ thus,
They can't be perfect without us.

"The indignation of the Lord
Awhile we will endure,
For we have sinn'd against His word;
But still His grace is sure:
'Tis all a gift: let no man boast:
For Jesus came to save the lost."

"Saviour, by Thy sweet compassion,
So unmeasured, so Divine;
By that bitter, bitter Passion;
By that crimson Cross of Thine;
By the woes Thy love once tasted
In this sin-marr'd world below,
Succour those in tribulation,
Succour those in sorrow now."

"Humble sinner, mourning soul,
O'er whose bosom sorrows roll,
'Tis for you the Saviour says,
Mine is all-sufficient grace.

"Dost thou grieve an evil heart?
Or some cursed fiery dart?
Do not yield to slavish fear,
All-sufficient grace is near.

"Art thou full of wants and woes?
Or does unbelief oppose?
Does thy Jesus hide His face?
Trust His all-sufficient grace.

"Can no case with Thine compare?
Do not yield to black despair,
For the worst of Adam's race
Christ has all-sufficient grace."

"They say, if a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? Shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to Me, saith Jehovah." "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto Me, My father, Thou art the guide of my youth?" "Return, Thou backsliding Israel, saith Jehovah; and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith Jehovah, and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against Jehovah thy God, and hast scattered Thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed My voice, saith Jehovah. Turn, O backsliding children, saith Jehovah; for I am married unto you." "Return, ye backsliding children and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto Thee; for Thou art Jehovah our God."—JER. iii. 1, 4, 12-14, 22.

"I will go and return to My place till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek Me early. Come, and let us return unto Jehovah: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up." "Then shall we know if we follow on to know Jehovah: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth."—HOS. v. 15; vi. 1, 3.

"I will bear the indignation of Jehovah, because I have sinned against Him, until He plead my cause and execute judgment for me: He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold His righteousness." "He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."—MICAH vii. 9, 19.

AND now I come to notice the illustration, which the Apostle himself adduces of his subject. "For the *earth*," he says, "which *drinketh in the rain* that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom," εὔθετον ἐκεῖνοις δι'οὓς, "suitable for those on account of whom, it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God"—a passage in which he likens the converted heart, which we have seen, that in another place he calls "God's *husbandry*,"[1] γεώργιον, His tilled, or cultivated field, the constant recipient of the grace of God's Holy Spirit, to a well-"dressed field," "drinking in the rain that cometh oft upon it"; and, under "the blessing of God," "bringing forth" fruit to perfection—a description of character, which is clearly also designated in the *fourth* hearer in the parable of the Sower. And *this* earth is said to "*drink in* the rain that cometh oft upon it," *not to taste it merely*, as the person alluded to in the text —a description of hearer again answering to that of the Psalmist, "O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee: my soul *thirsteth* for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and *thirsty land*, where no water is."[2] "I stretch forth my hands unto Thee: My soul *thirsteth* after Thee as a *thirsty land*": which "*drinketh in* the rain" when it "cometh upon it."[3] "But that which beareth thorns and briers," the Apostle continues, "is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing whose end is to be burned." The same figure we see is here continued; but the character here symbolised is clearly the same, as that which is pourtrayed by our Lord in the *third* hearer in the Parable of the Sower.

Now the Apostle affirms of this field, and, therefore, also of the person signified thereby, that it is "rejected," ἀδόκιμος. The word ἀδόκιμος literally means *unapproved*, and is derived from the primitive particle α, not, and δόκιμος, *that which is receivable as having been tried;* and the primary reference is to metals as having undergone the proof by fire. Here it of course means *unfit for the*

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 9. [2] Psa. lxiii. 1.
[3] Psa. cxliii. 6. See also Psa. xlii. 2; lxxxiv. 2.

purpose intended; and as that was an agricultural purpose it necessarily means *unfit for agricultural purposes, i.e.,* that the land was in reality *good for nothing!* With regard to the thing signified, it would of course have an equivalent meaning: and "no man," says our Lord, "having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit," εὐθετός, (the very same word which the Apostle here uses), "for the kingdom of God."[1]

Hence being ἀδόκιμος, the Apostle adds, it is "nigh unto cursing," and its "end is to be burned." The allusion here is no doubt to a practice, which was common among the Roman and Oriental nations, of burning bad and barren lands, for the purpose, if possible, of rendering them good and productive, by setting fire to the produce of the land as it stood in the field, and thus consuming it in the ground in which it grew.

Pliny the elder alludes to the practice in his Natural History, book xviii. 30. For speaking of the *culmus,* or stalk, he says:—"Sunt qui *accendant in arvo et stipulas,* magno Virgilii præconio. Summa autem ejus ratio, *ut herbarum semen exurant.*" "There are those who *set fire to it in the field with the straw,* a practice which is highly commended by Virgil. The chief reason for this is, *that they may consume the seed of the weeds.*"[2]

The passage in Virgil to which Pliny refers, is no doubt the following passage from the Georgics:—

"Sæpe etiam *steriles incendere* profuit *agros.*
Atque levem stipulam crepitantibus urere flammis:
Sive inde occultas vires et pabula terræ
Pinguia concipiunt; sive *illis omne per ignem*
Excoquitur vitium, atque exsudat inutilis humor,
Seu plures calor ille vias et cœca relaxat
Spiramenta, novas veniat qua succus in herbas;
Seu durat magis, et venas astringit hiantes:
Ne tennes pluviæ, rapidive potentia solis
Acrior, aut Boreæ penetrabile frigus adurat."[3]

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[1] Luke ix. 62.

[2] C. Plinii Secundi Nat. Hist. lib. xviii. lxxii. (xxx.), Delphin Classics. Pliny, vol. 6, p. 2936.

[3] Georg. i. 84-94.

"Long practice has a sure improvement found,
With kindled fires to burn the barren ground;
When the light stubble, to the flames resign'd,
Is driv'n along, and crackles in the wind.
Whether from hence the hollow womb of earth
Is warm'd with secret strength for better birth;
Or when *the latent vice is cur'd by fire,*
Redundant humours thro' the pores expire;
Or that the warmth distends the chinks, and wakes
New breathings, whence new nourishment she takes;
Or that the heat the gaping ground constrains,
New knits the surface, and new strings the veins,
Lest soaking show'rs should pierce her secret seat,
Or freezing Boreas chill her genial heat;
Or scorching suns too violently beat."[1]

We see then that it was a custom in the Roman Empire, of which Judea was at the time the Apostle wrote, a tributary province, to set fire to barren lands in the hope of ameliorating them, by extracting from out of them every vicious element which was supposed to have been one cause of their unfruitfulness; of opening out new sources of strength and nutriment which lay dormant, as it were, until the fire evoked them; and at the same time of destroying the seeds of the weeds, together with the weeds also, which then grew upon the ground; so that they might be effectually checked in their growth, if not entirely extirpated and eradicated. Now, if it be clear that the Apostle here alludes to this custom, and the context seems to prove that he does; and if it be clear also that some persons have been recovered from such an apparent state of backsliding, as the Scriptures themselves also manifest to be the case; then it will follow that the Apostle covertly hints also to the burning here spoken of, as a burning *primarily* for the *improvement* of the land in question; and as a necessary consequence also for the improvement and restoration of the person symbolized by the figure—such person in *this* case being one who is interested in the Covenant of grace; and our next object of enquiry, therefore, must be, what is the

[1] Dryden's Translation.

spiritual import of this figure with reference to the persons here symbolized.

Fire is in Scripture used as an emblem of *wrath*—"the wrath of God," which "is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men."[1] Hence we read, "Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the *wrath* of Jehovah; but the whole land shall be devoured by the *fire* of His jealousy."[2] And again, "Therefore wait ye upon Me, saith Jehovah, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for My determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them Mine *indignation*, even all My *fierce anger:* for all the land shall be devoured with the *fire* of My jealousy."[3] It is also used as an emblem of *the refining process of tribulation*, when used for that purpose by the Spirit of the living God. Thus the Lord Jesus, "the Messenger of the Covenant," is said to be "like *a refiner's fire*, and like fuller's soap: and He shall sit as a *refiner* and *purifier* of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi,[4] and purge Them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto Jehovah an offering in righteousness."[5] And John the Baptist also thus bare witness of Him. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with *fire*; whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will *burn up* the chaff *with unquenchable fire*."[6]

Looking then at the passage in the light that such a burning *may* be intended, in *some* cases, for the spiritual improvement of the *seemingly* lapsed soul; both of these meanings would *then* be comprehended in the term καῦσις

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[1] Rom. i. 18. [2] Zeph. i. 18.

[3] Zeph. iii. 8. See also Jer. iv. 4; xxi. 12; Amos v. 6, &c.

[4] That the passage under review has a bearing also upon Israel, I have fully shewn at some length in the work itself. See also "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," Vol. II., Chap. IX., Sec. 3, pp. 509-512.

[5] Mal. iii. 1, 3.

[6] Matt. iii. 11, 12. See also Luke iii. 16; Isa. xxxi. 9; Zech. xiii. 9, &c.

"burning," here employed. The burning of the barren field would then denote the unfruitful one being given up for a time to a taste of the wrath of God, or to what this same Apostle calls in another place, "the terror of the Lord,"[1] "the living God," into "whose hands," he says, with especial reference to apostates, "that it is a fearful thing to fall;"[2] and his being given over likewise, possibly at the same time, to great outward afflictions, not indeed with a view to his destruction, but with a view of driving him, as it were, to "remember from whence he had fallen, and to repent and do the first works;"[3] and to seek once more for mercy and grace at the hands of Him Whom he had so deeply pierced and wounded with his sins. It might comprehend in it likewise a being given up also, for a time, into the hands of Satan, to "be his servant, that he might know" the difference between "God's service and the service of the kingdom of the country" of "Egypt,"[4] over which Satan reigns. And who can tell the horrors of such a captivity: "for who knoweth the power of Thine anger?" —a captivity more or less dreadful indeed, as God sees fit to punish notorious backsliders for their sins, and in some proportion perhaps to their deserts—"for even thereafter as a man feareth, so is Thy displeasure;"[5]—and as they are able to bear it.[6]

And now how speedily do his blooming apples from the Dead Sea turn to ashes; his "vine" being as "the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah, his "grapes" have become "grapes of gall," and his "clusters bitter"; while his "wine" is transformed into "the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps."[7] The serpent that he has nourished in his bosom stings him to the very soul: while the memory of all his cherished and once attractive pleasures now gnaw him like a burning worm. "The arrows of the Almighty are within him, the poison whereof drinketh up his spirit:

[1] 2 Cor. v. 11. [2] Heb. x. 26-29, 31. [3] Rev. ii. 5. [4] 2 Chron. xii. 8, 9.
[5] Psa. xc. 11, Prayer Book version. [6] See in proof 2 Cor. ii. 6-8.
[7] Deut. xxxii. 32, 33.

the terrors of God do set themselves in array against him";[1] "a dreadful sound is in his ears, and "he believeth not that he shall return out of darkness."[2] The wrath of God seizes upon his soul, black darkness settles down upon his spirit, his conscience is racked with aggravated and unpardoned sin, and Satan is fearfully busy and active with him. Sleeping or waking, he seems to have no rest. "In the morning," he says, "Would God it were even! and at even, Would God it were morning!"[3] If he say, "My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint"; then is he "scared" with "dreams and terrified through visions."[4] The sweet breath of heaven to him, is but suggestive of a blast from hell; the glancing of the sunbeam, as the flaming of the pit. In the voice of the thunder, he hears but his dread summons to the bar of God; and even in the eddies of the very dust, as it circles on before him, he sees but his own soul, as it were, swept away with the myriads of the wicked into destruction. Every drop of hope, or happiness, or joy, seems completely to have been wrung out of creation; and there remains but for him a fearful waste howling wilderness of sin and death, with the dread curse of an angry God above all, withering and blasting as well his hopes, as his expectations for ever! "Hell from beneath" seems "moving to meet him at his coming";[5] and "there" seems to be "but a step between him and death";[6] when he will drop down "into darkness,"[7] deep "in the depths of hell."[8] This is a brief, but not one whit exaggerated, description of the state of a fearful backslider given over to Satan, and writhing under, what Thomas Goodwin, one of our Puritan Divines, rightly calls, "the hot scalding drops of God's wrath upon the conscience"—a sterile field indeed set on fire from above, and reeking under the smoke and burning of the pit!

But the reader may perhaps be asking for some evidence in support of the above view of the case, and it is only right

[1] Job vi. 4. [2] Job xv. 21, 22. [3] Deut. xxviii. 67.
[4] Job vii. 14. [5] Isa. xiv. 9. [6] 1 Sam. xx. 3.
[7] Isa. xlvii. 5; 1 Sam. ii. 9. [8] Prov. ix. 18.

that he should have it; and such evidence I shall now, therefore, proceed to adduce accordingly.

To begin with Scripture. We have a remarkable instance in point in Saint Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians. In his first Epistle, we find the Apostle addressing the Corinthians thus:—"It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed *might be taken away from among you.* For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, *to deliver such an one unto Satan* for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." "Therefore *put away from yourselves that wicked person.*"[1]

Now here we have a case, where a member of the Christian Church at Corinth had so "fallen away" from Christ, as to have relapsed into the grossest fornication; and where the members of the Church likewise, were so besotted with the prevailing ungodliness, (Corinth being a notoriously profligate city,) that they allowed such a state of things to exist in the Church without censure; and did not, as they ought to have done, at once cut off the offender from all Church-membership and privileges. The Apostle, however, speaking by the Spirit of God, instantly delivers judgment upon the case, and urges them at once solemnly to excommunicate him, and cast him back, as it were, once more into the Gentile world, to which he had again apostatized—a "world," which "lay in," or, under the dominion "of the wicked one,"[2] ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ; and, therefore, to deliver him over again unto Satan, "the god of this world,"

[1] 1 Cor. v. 1-5, 13. [2] 1 John v. 19.

whose blind and willing subject he once was, and had now in effect again become.

But mark for what purpose! Even this judgment, fearfully severe as it was, was yet not for his utter annihilation and destruction. No! it was in order to his spiritual improvement, and ultimate restoration unto God! "Whom I have delivered unto Satan *for the destruction of the flesh*," it is true, but "that *the spirit may be saved* in the day of the Lord Jesus!" It was not, therefore, for the destruction of *the backslider himself;* but for the destruction of his *flesh*, that his *spirit* might be *saved.*

But what was meant by the destruction of his *flesh?* Some commentators suppose, that as the Church was gifted with miraculous powers in those days, the Apostle signified, that if the Corinthians would cast this incestuous person out of their Church, as he had instructed them to do, this sentence of excommunication would, under God, have such a terrible effect upon him, that his flesh would waste away from off his bones, and he would, when he saw the fearful effect of the judgment, be thereby induced to repent of his sin, and confess and forsake it, and return to the God who had thus smitten him. And, possibly, such might have been the case: but this by no means exhausts the meaning of the passage: for the words, "for the *destruction* of the flesh," εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκὸς, import a final *utter destruction*, and *death* of the flesh; and it was indeed *to attain this end*, that he was delivered over unto Satan, and this in effect, in part at least, it would seem, before his complete restoration to God. The flesh here, therefore, clearly imports not the literal flesh alone of the person (although this might perhaps also be included in it,) but "the flesh," or *corrupt nature* of such person, a phrase which is frequently used by this Apostle in some others of his Epistles, in contradistinction to "the spirit," or *renewed nature* of the believer.[1]

Before man fell, his body was the handmaid and servant of his soul, which was originally created and employed for

[1] See Rom. viii.; Gal. v. &c.

God's glory: but the moment he fell, his soul was separated from, and lost its hold upon God; and falling down, as it were, to the level of his body, the body gained the supremacy, and from thenceforth the soul became, and still is, the handmaid and slave of the body. It is absorbed, immersed, and lost, as it were, in the flesh; and as we have seen that God always calls things by their right names, He calls the now sensual, corrupt and debased nature of man "*the flesh:*" and it is *this flesh*, no doubt, to which the Apostle here more particularly alludes. Hence the deeper the soul is sunk in the flesh, and the greater prominence the flesh assumes, the more is the soul lost sight of; and so prominent is the flesh, and so far has the soul sunk in some, as, for instance, among the most ignorant and degraded of the heathen, aye, and of so-called Christian nations likewise, that they seem scarcely above the level of the brutes. For they "that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness," says the Apostle, are "as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed."[1]

Hence when God would save a man, He quickens him by the Holy Ghost; and uniting him to Himself in Christ Jesus he draws his soul up out of the flesh, in which it was sunk, and gives it a beginning of something of its lost supremacy. Then there at once commences the conflict between "the flesh" and "the spirit;"[2] which will ultimately issue in the final triumph of the latter, and the utter destruction of the former, with a re-creation likewise of the body fitted in God's good time for its renewed soul. So that when a man has been truly converted to God, the death and utter destruction of his flesh having been determined upon, this is at once *begun to be put in exercise.* For as Christ gave up His holy flesh for crucifixion and death for us upon the cross: so we are commanded to give up our sinful flesh for experimental crucifixion and death in Him. For as our "old man was" *legally* "crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be stripped of its dominion"—so Bengel translates, καταργηθῇ —"that henceforth we should

[1] 2 Pet. ii. 10, 12. [2] Gal. v. 17.

not serve sin:"[1] so we are experimentally exhorted, "forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh" to "arm ourselves with the same mind;" that we "no longer should live the rest of our time in the flesh to the lusts of men but to the will of God."[2] Hence it is said that "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."[3] And the Apostle says, "that the world was crucified unto him, and he unto the world."[4]

When, therefore, a believer falls into sin, he revivifies "the flesh," and gives it an advantage over "the spirit;" and when he openly backslides from God, he does, *as it were*, take down his "old man" from its cross and re-crucifies Christ Himself; thereby giving "the body of death"[5] within him such power over him that it regains its lost ascendancy; and nothing but a direct and Almighty act of God can reduce it again to subjection; or re-transfix it, as it were, to its cross. The soul relapsing into the flesh, if it is to be saved, must, therefore, be "delivered unto Satan *for the destruction of the flesh*" —the end of the sterile field, therefore, becoming overgrown with thorns is, that it "*is to be burned.*" The delivering of this incestuous Corinthian, therefore, to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, was in fact nothing more nor less than the burning of the sterile field for the destruction of the thorns which had infested and overgrown its surface—thorns being, as we have seen in Scripture language, the lust of this very flesh, the nature of which we have been considering.[6]

And from his second Epistle to the Corinthians, we find that this punishment had precisely the effect which the

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[1] Rom. vi. 6.

[2] 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2. See a full exposition of this passage in my "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," Vol. I., Chap. XII., Sec. 2, pp. 740-748.

[3] Gal. v. 24. [4] Gal. vi. 14. [5] Rom. vii. 24.

[6] See and compare Prov. xxiv. 31; Jer. iv. 3; with Mat. xiii. 7, 22; Mark iv. 7, 18; Luke viii. 7, 14.

Apostle, under God, intended that it should have. For writing to them upon this subject, he says: "But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness. For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me? And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you. But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part; that I may not overcharge you all."[1] "For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same Epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For, behold, this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter. Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you."[2]

Hence it appears that the Apostle's ardent and powerful Epistle had awoke them to a proper sense of their danger, and to a right sense of their duty; and, acting under his authority, and at his request, they had solemnly excommunicated the offending member, and had cast him out of the Church. It seems, however, that they were now erring in

[1] 2 Cor. ii. 1-5. [2] 2 Cor. vii. 8-12.

the opposite extreme, perhaps from a mistaken notion that the man was utterly lapsed and gone, and that it was, therefore, now impossible for him to be renewed or restored. Be this as it may, it seems that the effect of this discipline upon him was so severe, that in a very short space of time (both Epistles having been written within the year), this poor backslider was brought down to the very lowest depths of misery, and was, when the Apostle wrote his Second Epistle, in such a despairing state of mind—the burning having so effectually done its work—that the Apostle thought it necessary at once to instruct them as to his re-admission into the Christian Church, and his right, in consequence of his repentance and reconciliation to God, to Christian communion and fellowship. "*Sufficient* to such a man," says he, "is *this punishment*, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise, ye ought rather to *forgive* him, and *comfort* him, lest perhaps such an one should be *swallowed* up with *overmuch sorrow*. Wherefore I beseech you, that ye would *confirm your love to him*."[1]

And oh, what a sublime view does this present to us of the immense and inconceivable lovingkindness of our God! Oh! backslider, does not your heart burn within you, and melt before God, at the thought of it? "*Lest perhaps* such an one should be swallowed up with *overmuch* sorrow!" "Lest perhaps," μήπως, that by no means, lest in *any* way such an one should be swallowed up with *overmuch* sorrow—*τῇ περισσοτέρᾳ λύπῃ καταποθῇ*, overwhelmed by the excess of his sorrow—the metaphor being taken from a drowning man swept away and engulphed in a torrent! The sorrow was sent him *for a special purpose*, his own individual restoration and renewal; but when it had *accomplished that purpose*, oh! *the moment it had accomplished it*, let it not be continued, oh, let it not be continued an instant: but *for fear* the poor backslider should be drowned in an *excess* of grief—*lest by any means* so sad an event should happen—"I beseech you," says the Apostle, for "ye *ought*" to do

[1] 2 Cor. ii. 6-8.

so—"I *beseech* you that ye would" *forgive* him and *comfort* him," and "confirm your *love* toward him"!

Again, passing by the case of Peter, whose apostasy was a very fearful one—the full extent of his "cursing and swearing" amounting to this, that he might be devoted to utter destruction, if he ever even knew the man[1]—as well as those of Hymeneus and Alexander, whom Paul says he had "*delivered unto Satan*, that they may be *taught*," *παιδευθῶσί*, "not to blaspheme,"[2] which are clearly cases in point; I must come down to modern instances, which, alas! are but too numerous; two only, however, of which I shall give in this connexion.

The first is that of the celebrated Joseph Hart, the hymn writer, who, after his restoration from backsliding, became an eminent minister of "the Gospel of the grace of God."

Joseph Hart was born in the city of London, about the year 1712, of believing parents, who made him the subject of many prayers. He "imbibed the sound doctrines of the Gospel from his infancy;" nor was he "without touches of heart, checks of conscience, and meltings of affections, by the secret strivings of God's Spirit with" him "while very young:" but it was not until he was about 21, that he "began to be under great anxiety concerning" his "soul." Then in an "uneasy, restless round of sinning and repenting, working and dreading," he "went on for above seven years." And now he saw that he was in a dangerous state, and longed to feel the merits of Christ applied to his soul by the Holy Spirit, and made the strongest efforts to call God *his* God. "But alas!" he says, "I could no more do this than I could raise the dead! I found now by woful experience, that faith was not in my power; and the question with me now was, not whether I *would* be a Christian or

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[1] Mat. xxvi. 74. I have considered the case of Peter at some length in my first Vol. of "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," Appendix pp. 782-788; as well as in my "Personality and History of Satan," Chap. VI., Sec. 2, pp. 188-200.

[2] 1 Tim. i. 20.

no; but whether I *might*: not whether I should repent and believe; but whether God would give me true repentance and a living faith."

"After some weeks passed in this gloomy, dreadful state," he says, "the Lord was pleased to comfort me a little, by enabling me to appropriate in some measure, the merits of the Saviour to my own soul. This comfort increased for some time; and *my understanding was also wonderfully illuminated* in reading the Holy Scriptures, so that I could see Christ in many passages where before I little imagined to find Him, and was encouraged to hope I had an interest in His merits and the benefits by Him procured to His people. In this blessed state my continuance was but short; for, rushing impetuously into notions beyond my experience, I hastened to make myself a Christian by mere doctrine, adopting other men's opinions before I had tried them; and set up for a great light in religion, *disregarding the internal work of grace begun in my soul by the Holy Ghost.* This liberty, assumed by myself, and not given by Christ, soon grew to libertinism, in which I took large progressive strides, and advanced to a dreadful height both in principle and practice. In a word, I ran such dangerous lengths both of carnal and spiritual wickedness, that I even outwent professed infidels, and shocked the irreligious and profane with my horrid blasphemies and monstrous impieties. Hardness of heart was with me a sign of good confidence; carelessness went for trust, empty notions for great light, a seared conscience for assurance of faith, and rash presumption for Christian courage. My actions were in a great measure, conformable to my notions: for having (as I imagined) obtained by Christ a liberty of sinning, I was resolved to make use of it, and thought the more I could sin without remorse, the greater hero I was in faith. A tender conscience I deemed weakness; prayer I left for novices and bigots; and a broken and contrite heart was a thing too low and legal for me to approve, much more to desire. Not to dwell on particulars, I shall only say

(what, though shocking to hear, is too true) that I committed 'all uncleanness with greediness.' "

"In this abominable state I continued, *a loose backslider, an audacious apostate, a bold-faced rebel, for nine or ten years*, not only committing acts of lewdness myself, but infecting others with the poison of my delusions." "But God, Who is rich in mercy, and Whose grace is, like Himself, almighty, did not altogether give me up to hardness and impenitence: I felt from time to time, meltings of heart, and inward compunction; and had a secret hope at the bottom (which often rose above my gross corruptions) that I should *not* always go on in this abandoned manner, and *run as reprobate to final perdition.* About seven or eight years ago I began by degrees to reform a little, and to live in a more sober and orderly manner. And now, as I retained the form of sound words, and held the doctrines of free grace, justification by faith, and other orthodox tenets, I was tolerably confident of the goodness of my state; especially as I could now also add that other requisite, a moral behaviour."

"For several years I went on in this easy, cool, smooth and indolent manner, with a lukewarm, insipid kind of religion, yet not without some secret whispers of God's love, and visitations of His grace, and now and then warm addresses to Him in private prayer. *But alas, all this while my heart was whole; the fountains of the great deep of my sinful nature were not broken up!* I was therefore conscious that the written word of God was against me, especially those parts that represent the children of God as a poor, afflicted, mourning, broken-hearted people; of which characteristics I was destitute; nor was the blood of Christ effectually applied to my soul." "About three or four years ago I fell into a deep despondency of mind, because I had never experienced grand revelations and miraculous discoveries." "But after many a gloomy, doleful hour, spent in solitude and sorrow, not without strong and frequent cries and tears to God, and beseeching Him to reveal Himself to

me in a clearer manner, I thought He asked me, in the midst of one of my prayers, Whether I rather chose the visionary revelations of which I had formed some wild idea, or to be content with trusting to the low, despised mystery of a crucified man? I was enabled to prefer the latter; and felt great comfort in expecting the future effects of my choice. But gloom of mind and dejection of spirit still frequently overwhelmed me: from which I used to be relieved by pouring out my soul to Christ, and beseeching Him, with cries and groans and tears, to reveal Himself to me; praying, at the same time, that it might be done without pain; for I was so much a coward, that I preferred ease to every other consideration. I was often answered by such portions of Scripture as these: 'Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me'—'That which thou hast already, hold fast till I come.' To the latter of these I closed my hands fast, and cried, I would sooner part with every drop of blood than let go the hopes I already had in a crucified Saviour; and to the former I used to reply (after considering the words, 'My reward is with Me,') 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.' For, though *I expected some sore visitation*, yet believing that Christ would bring strength and power with Him, I waited and longed for His coming."

"The week before Easter, 1757"—he would now be about 45 years of age—"*I had such an amazing view of the agony of Christ in the garden* as I know not well how to describe. I was lost in wonder and adoration: and the impression it made was too deep, I believe, ever to be obliterated. I shall say no more of this; but only remark that, notwithstanding all that is talked about the sufferings of Jesus, none can know anything of them but by the Holy Ghost; and I believe he that knows most knows but very little." "I used to be often terribly cut down with those words, 'And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth' (Matt. xxv. 30), which sometimes sunk me almost to utter

despair; and then again I used to receive some comfort. At length despair began to make dreadful head against me. Hopes grew fainter, and terrors stronger." "*The convictions I now laboured under were* not like those legal convictions I had felt, but far worse, *horrible beyond expression. I had trampled under foot the blood of Jesus, and for whom there remained no more sacrifice for sin.*" "So deep was my despair, that I found in me a kind of wish that I might only be damned with the common damnation of transgressors of God's law. But, oh! I thought, the hottest place in hell must be my portion. *All the Evangelical promises were so far from comforting me, that they were my greatest tormentors, because they would only increase my damnation.*" "While these horrors remained I used to run backwards and forwards to places of religious worship:" "but in general almost everything served only to condemn me, to make me rue my backslidings, and envy those children of God who had continued to walk honestly ever since their first conversion. *Notions of religion I wanted no man to teach me*—I had doctrine enough; *but found, by woful experience, that dry doctrine, though ever so sound, will not sustain a soul in the day of trial.*"

"In this sad state I went moping about (and that I could was next to a miracle), having some little hope at the bottom under all, which now and then would glimmer, *but was soon overwhelmed again with clouds of horror*, till Whit-Sunday, 1757, when I happened to go in the afternoon to the Moravian Chapel in Fetter Lane, where I had been several times before. The minister preached on these words, 'Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee in the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth,' (Rev. iii. 10). Though the text and most of what was said on it, seemed to make greatly against me, yet I listened with much attention, and felt myself deeply impressed by it. When it was over I thought of hastening to Tottenham Court Chapel; but presently, altering my mind, returned to

my own house. I was hardly got home when I felt myself melting away into a strange softness of affection, which made me fling myself on my knees before God. *My horrors were immediately dispelled, and such light and comfort flowed into my heart as no words can paint.* The Lord by His Spirit of love came, not in a visionary manner into my brain, but with such Divine power and energy into my soul, that I was lost in blissful amazement.

"I cried out, 'What me, Lord?'

"His Spirit answered to me, 'Yes, thee.'

"I objected, 'But I have been so unspeakably vile and wicked.'

"The answer was, 'I pardon thee fully and freely. Thy own goodness' (for I had now set about a thorough amendment, if peradventure I might be spared) 'cannot save thee, nor shall thy wickedness damn thee. I undertake to work all thy works in thee and for thee, and to bring thee safe through all?'

"The alteration I then felt in my soul was as sudden and palpable as that which is experienced by a person staggering and almost sinking, under a burden, when it is immediately taken from his shoulders. Tears ran in streams from my eyes for a considerable while; and I was so swallowed up in joy and thankfulness, that I hardly knew where I was. *I threw my soul willingly into my Saviour's hands, lay weeping at His feet, wholly resigned to His will,* and only begging that I might, if He was graciously pleased to permit it, be of some service to His Church and people"—a prayer which was afterwards abundantly answered.

The last case which I shall record is one which is referred to by the late Miss Helen Plumtre, in one of her beautiful letters, which were published after her death. Writing to an afflicted friend in the year 1829, she says:—"I have, as you desired, my dear afflicted friend, been on my knees begging, that as the pen is in my hand so I myself may be in the hand of my God; that I may be only moved and guided by Him; and that the words He teacheth me to say

may indeed be 'a message from God' to your precious soul; for truly except He speak, vain is the help of man. The Holy Spirit has therefore been pleased to take the title of 'THE Comforter,' not *a* comforter but *the* only one; for you and I have both found, my dear fellow-traveller, that until *He* removes the burden from us, not all our companions, however kind, however desirous, can move it one inch; and if He give the quietness, if it be but, as it were, with a look, who then can make trouble? I have earnestly entreated Him thus to turn and look upon you, my sorrowing friend; but before I could ask He seemed to say how is it that thou dost not understand that *I am* looking upon her, or whence would arise *those groans of deep distress, this horror that hath overwhelmed her?* Does Satan thus disturb his own? Would drowsy dead nature thus give the alarm? Oh, Lord, I do see, and I would acknowledge Thy might. *I find no seared conscience here* but the cries of Thy own Spirit, long indeed resisted, long unheeded, but *not quenched*; no, nor ever shall be, till a worm be found stronger than omnipotence, and exulting devils cry over the ruins of a deserted soul. 'Behold *here* proofs of weakness and impotency in the All-wise, All-powerful Jehovah, inasmuch as He began to build, and is not able to finish.' Oh, be such a thought far, far from us."

"You ask me if I have ever known such a case as yours; I am truly happy and thankful to have to tell you, that within the last three weeks, the blessed deliverance from even worse thraldom than you are in, of a poor woman in this place, has come under my immediate notice. *One with whom I used to take sweet counsel*, who seemed to enjoy spiritual things, and whose only concern was that her husband did not help her on in the way, *was drawn away by the wiles of the devil, and has been a fearful backslider.* She said *she felt that God had forsaken her; that* SATAN HAD FULL POSSESSION OF HER; *that there was not a promise that could reach her;* that all I said about her soul was useless, &c. *In this awful state she has continued above a year.*"

"Last week a message was sent by a pious neighbour, to ɜg I would go and visit this poor woman, *who was seeking ɜr long-lost Lord sorrowing.* I went, and found that *the ɪithful Shepherd had indeed brought back His silly sheep ·om the wretched mountain on which it had been wandering ı the cloudy and dark day.* In the night she had been ɪused with the enquiry, 'What must I do to be saved?' ɪd the God of peace spoke His own sweet answer to her ɜry heart, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* ɜALT *be saved.*' Once more she looked into her long nopened Bible; once more she bent her stubborn knee; ɪce more she went up to the Courts of the Lord. This as about ten days before I saw her. Her hope is indeed ɜry faint, but it comes from the God of hope, and shall not ɪake her ashamed. She appears like the poor backslider ɔoken of in Ezek. xvi. 63, as if she would never open her ɪouth any more because of her shame, '*When* I am pacified ɪwards thee for *all* that thou hast done, saith the Lord.' I ɪad to her Hosea xiv., to which she listened with many ɪars: she now and then sobbed out, 'Oh, I am afraid I am ɪst!' I said, 'I am very pleased to hear you call yourself y that name; you are the very one then that Jesus came to ɜek and to save. I don't ask how far you have been, for [e does not; I don't ask how many calls you have slighted, ɪr He does not; but I can tell you this message from His ɪn mouth, 'I will *heal* their backslidings, I will love them eely; Mine anger IS turned away. They may remember, ɪd go sorrowing at the remembrance; but I will remember ɔ *more*, it shall not be mentioned unto them.' Oh, my iend, don't think yours are the first wounds of the sort, or ɪe worst that ever were taken in hand. The *first* they ɪrely are not, as many a well-healed David could testify; ɪd the worst—oh, yes, say you, but they are the worst. Vell, be it so; but what are your wounds, that they should ɪhaust all the balm in Gilead, and withstand all the skill : that Almighty Physician? Oh, no, no, no! you shall yet t at the feet of Jesus, watering them, it may be, with

many tears; but you shall sit and sing as in the days of your youth, and as in the day when you came up out of Egypt (Hosea ii. 15). The Lord shall speak comfortably to you, and the days of darkness and desertion shall be ended. My paper is full, but my heart has not yet emptied itself. I will pour it out again to the Lord for you, and beg that He may put His blessing in this letter, and then it shall be blessed indeed!"[1]

And now I shall conclude with some practical reflexions upon the subject, which will be needed to clear up some seeming difficulties which naturally arise out of it, and which some of my readers may perhaps not be able of themselves to solve.

A careful consideration of the cases of the several persons recorded in the preceding, as well as in this Chapter, will at once show that there is a very marked distinction between them. With respect to the illuminated unregenerate persons mentioned in the last Chapter, it will have been noticed, in every single case, that when they had renounced their profession of the Gospel, Satan at once took possession of their whole being, and literally hounded them on to destruction. This was because (although in many of such cases where the Spirit is *on* them for *gifts*, they are left unmolested until the end,) they had *not* the Spirit *in* them for *grace*—they had never been quickened by the Holy Ghost, or born again from above. They, therefore, came under the description of those persons spoken of by Peter, who "after they have escaped the pollutions of the world *through the knowledge* of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" "are again entangled therein, and overcome;" and whose "*latter end is worse with them than the beginning.* For it had been better for them," he says, "not to have *known the way of righteousness*, than, after they have known it, *to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.*" And he compares them—not, as he does the righteous, to

[1] Letters of Helen Plumtre, pp. 410-413.

"*sheep* going astray,"[1] and afterwards "returning unto the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls," but—to "the *dog*," which is "turned to his own vomit again; and the *sow* that was washed to her wallowing in the mire;"[2] clearly intimating that, notwithstanding their illuminated *understandings*, their *hearts*, and, therefore, their whole natures, had remained *unchanged*. John also refers to such persons, when he says, "They went out from us, but *they were not of us;* for *if* they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that *they were not all of us*."[3] And we know that "*without* are *dogs*, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."[4]

In the other cases, however, we can at once perceive a mighty difference: for these having been truly quickened by the Holy Ghost, and born again of God, were necessarily interested in the Divine Covenant of grace; and consequently, when they were seduced by Satan, to "forsake" God's "law, and walk not in" His "judgments," He had to "visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes;" although he would not "*utterly* take" His "lovingkindness from them, nor suffer" His "faithfulness" towards them "to fail"[5]—albeit they might have thought so at the time. Hence, although it might become necessary in extreme cases of this kind, to "deliver" such offenders "over to Satan;" yet it would be but *for a time only*, and not for *their* destruction, but for the "destruction of" *their* "*flesh*," "that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." For if a backsliding believer, instead of giving up his "flesh" for experimental crucifixion and death in Christ, will at any time "make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof,"[6] he may depend upon this, that God will crucify it for him; and that in a way that he little dreams of; for

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[1] 1 Pet. ii. 25. [2] 2 Pet. ii. 20-22. [3] 1 John ii. 19.
[4] Rev. xxii. 15. [5] Psa. lxxxix. 30-35. [6] Rom. xiii. 14.

if you "grieve the Spirit of God," you may be quite sure of this, that He will *grieve you!* God hates sin in His children as much as He hates it in others, and perhaps more so. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."[1] And if any professor will take encouragement to sin, because of the Covenant of grace; such a person but too clearly proves, that *he is not* interested in it; and *this* therefore, can only be *the word for him*—If "there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; and it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, *I* shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: Jehovah will not spare him, but then the anger of Jehovah and His jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and Jehovah shall blot out his name from under heaven."[2]

As, therefore, we see that the Lord sometimes makes use of Satan as a sharp pruning knife to cut off, as it were, the excrescences of His people; it becomes necessary that we should look into this matter a little more closely, as the old Puritans used to say, "by way of *use*," *i.e.*, by way of practical and experimental application of it to our souls.

That the Lord overrules the malice of Satan, not only for the correction as well as even for the edification of His own people in Christ Jesus,[3] but also by way of judgment for the destruction of the wicked, is clearly exemplified in the cases of Job and of Ahab:[4] only where His own people are concerned, we see likewise that Satan has to *ask permission* to sift *them;* as he had to do when he sought to attack Job himself, as well as Peter.[5] The Scriptures also shew us that he is constantly accusing both the righteous, as well as the wicked, before God—his accusations being based upon the

[1] Amos iii. 2. [2] Deut. xxix. 18-20.
[3] Job. xxiii. 10; xl. 3-5; xlii. 4-6; John xxi. 15-17.
[4] 1 Kings xxii. 15-29, 34-40. [5] Luke xxii. 31, 32.

plea that they are "under the law;" and therefore, "under the curse," which ought to be executed upon them—his plea against the righteous, if they have not fallen into open sin, being that they are hypocrites;[1] and, if they have, that "their spots are not the spots of God's children;"[2] and that, not having, therefore, been "born again," these ought doubly to be condemned. This is clearly proved from a careful comparison of Psalm cix. with Rev. xii. 7-12, and other kindred passages of Scripture: but as this is denied by so many who suppose that Satan was cast down from "the heavenlies" at Christ's resurrection, and had no further power to accuse the righteous before God; I shall have to consider the subject a little more closely.

The passage in the Revelation runs as follows:—"And there was war in the heaven," ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ: "Michael and his angels fought; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in the heaven," ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceieth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in the heaven," ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens," οἱ οὐρανοὶ, "and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

Now those who suppose that all this took place at Christ's resurrection not only do violence to the text, but flatly contradict the testimony of the Holy Ghost in this Book, as

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[1] Job i. 9. [2] Deut. xxxii. 5.

well as in many other parts of Scripture, and introduce a principle, which is diametrically opposed to all Scripture testimony, *i.e.*, that in a prophecy, which necessarily relates to *future* events, a *past* circumstance is predicted.

That they contradict the testimony of the Holy Ghost in this Book is clear, for

(1) The Book is styled "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," which God gave unto Him, to shew unto His servants *things which must shortly come to pass*,"[1] clearly proving that *they had not taken place before:* while in Chapter iv. 1, He says to John, "Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be *hereafter*," *μετὰ ταῦτα*, "after these things," *i.e.*, *after* what He had predicted of the seven churches—the prophecy in Rev. xii. 7-12, being *one* of "these things!"

(2) They contradict His testimony in the passage itself: because it is stated that when Satan is thus cast down "the Kingdom of our God and the power of His Christ" "is come." And we learn from Rev. xi. 15, that this will not take place until "the seventh angel sounds:" for which thanks are then given to God by the angelic hosts. Moreover the saints are said to have "overcome" Satan "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony;" shewing that such accusations must have been made against them after that blood had been shed for them.

(3) They contradict His testimony in other parts of Scripture, as for instance in Isa. liv. 17; Psa. cix.; Dan. xii. 1-3; and Zech. iii—passages which I shall shortly have to refer to; and notably the passage in Eph. vi. 12; which tells us plainly that Satan, and his hosts of wicked spirits, *are still* "*in the heavenlies*," *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις*—a phrase which is applied in contradistinction to things that are on earth; and is spoken of even as the dwelling-places of the *holy* angels themselves![2]

It is quite true that "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus;[3] and that the

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[1] Rev. i. 1. [2] Eph. i. 20; iii. 10. [3] Rom. viii. 1.

challenge of the Apostle ever holds good with respect to them, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, *Who also maketh intercession for us*"[1]—a point which I shall have to touch upon shortly. And this, because all believers were legally, or representatively, crucified with Christ, died in Him, were buried with Him, rose with Him, ascended into Heaven with Him, and now sit in the heavenlies, ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις—the same phrase which we have before met with—with Him; far above the condemning power of the law, sin, death, hell, and all adversaries.[2]

But when the Scripture says, that nothing shall be laid to the charge of God's elect, it does not mean that no charge shall be made against them by the Adversary—for the Scriptures assert the contrary—but that no such charge shall ever be *established against them*, so as to cause them to be "*condemned*" in consequence; as the passage itself plainly shews. Hence we read, "The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. Jehovah will not leave him in his hand, nor *condemn* him when he judged."[3] And again, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment *thou* shalt *condemn*. This is the heritage of the servants of Jehovah; and their righteousness is of Me, saith Jehovah."[4] This passage no doubt primarily refers to Israel; but as the context also shows to *all* "the servants of Jehovah" likewise: but if Satan were cast down from the heavenlies at Christ's resurrection, there would then be no persons to whom it could apply: for no such tongue *could* ever rise in judgment against the saints, *i.e.*, as touching their righteousness *before God:* for they have been falsely accused,

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[1] Rom. viii. 33, 34.

[2] See in proof Rom. vi. 6; Gal. ii. 20; 2 Cor. v. 14; Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12; iii. 1; Eph. ii. 6; Col. iii. 3, &c.

[3] Psa. xxxvii. 32, 33. [4] Isa. liv. 17.

judged and condemned, aye, and executed, *by men* all through this age!

But what saith the passage itself? "Every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." Primarily I have said, that this passage refers to Israel: but at what period of their history? Clearly, when "Jehovah removes the iniquity of that land in one day," as Zech iii. 9, tells us—when they shall "look upon Him, Whom they have pierced, and mourn"[1]—*when "the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for,"* as we see in Zech iii. 1, by the great adversary of souls, "and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, *and they shall not be found:* for I will pardon them whom I reserve."[2] And as the sins of Israel and Judah *are on them yet*, it is manifest that this passage is still *future* as to them. But as the passage, as we have seen, refers also to *all* "the servants of Jehovah," it is clear that Satan must still have the power of bringing accusations also *against them*—although of course with no more prospect of success—and the inference that Rev. xii. 7-12, refers to a *past* event must, therefore, of necessity be an erroneous one. And such accusations, as the passage clearly shows, are accusations which have reference to *righteousness*—Satan urging, as I have already hinted, that the persons he accuses do not possess it, and ought, therefore, to be condemned: while our Advocate, as is also hinted in Rom. viii. 26, comes forward to "rebuke" him, and to prove, as He Himself also asserts in this passage, that they *do*.

This is very clearly brought out in the passage in Zech. iii., which we will now consider, and which runs as follows:—"And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Jehovah, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And Jehovah said unto Satan, Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan; even Jehovah that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy gar-

[1] Zech. xii. 10. [2] Jer. l. 20.

ments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, *Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.*" [1]

As, however, I have given a full exposition of this passage in my Second Volume of "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," [2] I can but glance at it in this place. "Joshua the high priest," the head and representative of the Jewish nation, no doubt here represents that nation at the period spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, when their priestly garments had become utterly defiled [3]—a fact which they will shortly after the time spoken of in this vision, according to this same prophet, feelingly acknowledge in the words following: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and *all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;* and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." [4]

Before this, however, takes place we see "Satan standing at Joshua's right hand to resist him"—the ground of Satan's accusation being ever the same, the absence of a righteousness to cover him, he being still "clothed in filthy garments"—Satan no doubt in this case urging that, as that nation had not only rejected and "crucified the Lord of Glory," but had also put their trust in Antichrist as their Messiah; as our Lord told the Jews of his day that they would ultimately do,[5] the entire nation ought in strict justice to be "cast away," not for a time only, but for ever. Nevertheless, as "the third part of the Jewish nation," [6] the "remnant according to the election of grace," [7] will refuse to bow down to Antichrist, and it would, therefore, be unjust that they should perish for the sins of others, and "the gifts and calling of God are without change of purpose," *ἀμεταμέλητα* [8] on His part, their Advocate comes forward to plead their

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[1] Zech. iii. 1-4.
[2] Chap. IX., Sec. 3., pp. 512-519.
[3] Isa. i. 10-17, 21.
[4] Isa. lxiv. 6.
[5] John v. 43.
[6] Zech. xiii. 8.
[7] Rom. xi. 5.
[8] Rom. xi. 29.

cause, and to "rebuke Satan," on the ground that these are interested in the Divine Covenant of grace, having been "*chosen*" in the Lord, as "brands plucked out of the burning." And now the situation is changed: for it is not now a question whether the sinner has broken the law or not—*that is fully admitted*—but whether his Head and Surety Jesus, as his Divine Substitute, *has kept it for him, and has died under its curse* in his place and stead. And then follows the taking away of the filthy garments from him, and the "clothing" him "with change of raiment," or, in other words, of his rejection of his own polluted righteousness, and his being clothed with "the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and *upon all* them that believe."[1] And now we are told "the iniquity of that land" is "removed" "in one day;" while the pardoned remnant, as a parallel passage informs us, now cry out with rapture, "I will greatly rejoice in Jehovah, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for *He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.*"[2] For "He hath made Him, Who knew no sin, to be sin for us; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."[3]

The passage in Dan. xii. 1-3, which clearly refers *to the time of the end*, also shows us that Michael's "standing up" for the Jewish people, and his contest with Satan on their behalf, will take place *at that time;* and consequently that it could *not* have taken place at Christ's resurrection, as so many ignorantly suppose: and as this contest is there said to take place when Antichrist "shall come to his end, and none shall help him"[4]—which 2 Thes. ii. 8, tells us, is to take place at Christ's Second Coming—and is connected likewise with the resurrection of the saints,[5] it is manifest that Rev. xii. 7-12, *must of necessity refer to the same contest.*

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[1] Rom. iii. 22. [2] Isa. lxi. 10. [3] 2 Cor. v. 21.
[4] Dan. xi. 45. [5] Dan. xii. 2, 3.

And this leads me to speak of Christ as our Advocate and Intercessor before God; for the Scriptures clearly distinguish between His offices as Priest and Advocate. As a Priest, He hath "obtained eternal redemption for us,"[1] and He "beareth the iniquities of our holy things:"[2] but as an Advocate He by law maintains our right thereto against the devil and all his angels. For the office of an advocate is not to plead with a judge *to show mercy* upon a criminal; for if a criminal be before a judge, the judge is bound by the law *to condemn him as such*: but the office of an advocate is to set before the judge *the legal proofs that his client has the law in his favour*. Hence we read that "Jehovah pleadeth *the cause* of His people."[3] And John says, "If any man sin," ἁμάρτῃ, "have fallen into sin," *i.e.*, have been surprised by any pressing temptation into any grievous open sin, "we have *an Advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ *the righteous:* and He is *the propitiation* for our sins"[4]—a passage which again shows us, that on such occasions (as the passages in Rev. xii. also clearly proves), Satan at once comes forward to accuse him of it before God, endeavouring, as we have seen, to show that such a sin is inconsistent with a man's being in a state of grace, and that he ought, therefore, to be condemned under the law in consequence. And now our Advocate has to come forward to "plead his cause," and to "make intercession for" him, by showing that that sin has been atoned for—His intercession being grounded solely (as the passage shows), on the "propitiation" already made for him—pleading with His "Father," the "husbandman," Who "purgeth," or, "*pruneth*" every "living branch" in "the true Vine,"[5] that the poor miserable backslider shall, after chastisement, be restored, and shall *not* be brought under condemnation in consequence:[6] as the question of righteousness has been before settled

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[1] Heb. ix. 15. [2] Exod. xxviii. 38. [3] Isa. li. 22.
[4] 1 John ii. 1, 2. [5] John xv. 1, 2.
[6] Psa. lxxxix. 30-34; Isa. lv. 3; Rom. iv. 16; 1 Cor. xi. 32; Gal. vi. 1.

in his case when he believed in Jesus—"the Lord our Righteousness."[1]

But as the Scriptures plainly teach us, not only that Christ's advocacy is grounded solely upon His sacrifice for sin, but also that He is an advocate only for the children of God,[2] it becomes necessary also for me to show what becomes of those whom Satan pleads against, who are *not* God's children. And this we learn from Psalm cix.—a psalm which primarily refers to Ahithophel, prophetically to Judas,[3] and exhaustively to all rejecters of the Christ of God, who had formerly professed to be His disciples and followers, as is plain from John xv. 25, where our Lord quotes the fourth verse of this Psalm as applicable to such persons themselves. And what does the Psalm say of them?

"Set thou a wicked man over him: *and let Satan stand at his right hand.* When he shall be judged, *let him be condemned*: and let his prayer become sin." "As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him. As *he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment,* so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones. Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a

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[1] Jer. xxiii. 6. When I say, that Christ, as our Advocate, has *now* to come forward to plead the cause of His people, who have sinned against Him, I am of course speaking *after the manner of men;* for I perfectly agree with the following admirable remarks of Bunyan on this subject: for, speaking upon Christ's intercession, in his "Saint's Privilege and Profit," he says:—"Of the *manner* of His intercession, whether it be vocal or virtual, whether by voice of mouth, or merit of deed, I will not determine; we know but little while here, how things are done in heaven, and we may soon be too carnal, or fantastical in our apprehensions. Intercession He makes, that is, He manages the efficacy and worth of His suffering with God for us, and is always prevalent in His thus managing of His merits on our behalf. And as to the *manner*, though it be in itself infinitely beyond what we can conceive while here, yet God hath stooped to our weakness, and so expressed Himself in this matter, that we might somewhat, though but childishly, apprehend Him.—1 Cor. xiii. 11, 12."

[2] 1 John ii. 1. [3] Acts i. 20.

girdle wherewith he is girded continually. Let this be the reward of Mine adversaries from Jehovah, and of them that speak evil against My soul." "Let Mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle." And then contrasting these with the righteous, the Psalmist, *Who speaks in the Person of Christ*, continues, "I will greatly praise Jehovah with My mouth; yea, I will praise Him among the multitude. For *He shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from them that condemn his soul.*"[1]

I need hardly, therefore, make any extended comment upon this last passage, as we have these two classes of persons here most clearly set forth, as well as the reasons given for the Lord's distinctive dealings with them. Only it may perhaps be needful for me to shew why they are said to "love cursing," and in judgment, therefore, to be "clothed" with it, and handed over to Satan for destruction. A few passages of Scripture, however, put in apposition will soon clear the matter up. "Now, we know," says the Apostle, "that what the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become *guilty* before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin."[2] "For as many as are of the works of the law are *under the curse*, for it is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."[3] Therefore "he that *believeth* on Him is *not condemned:* but he that *believeth not* is *condemned already*, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And *this* is *the condemnation*, that light is come into the world, and men *loved darkness* rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil *hateth the light*, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be discovered" (margin). "But he

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[1] Psa. cix. 6, 7, 17-20, 29-31. [2] Rom. iii. 19, 20. [3] Gal. iii. 10.

that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."[1] *To love sin*, therefore, is to *love the curse* which is the consequence of it, and to *hate holiness* is to *hate the life* which can alone consist with it. Hence Christ says of such, "Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer, they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find Me: for that they *hated knowledge*, and did not choose the fear of Jehovah; they would none of My counsel: they despised all My reproof, therefore shall they *eat of the fruit of their own way*, and be *filled with their own devices*."[2] "For whoso findeth Me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of Jehovah. But he that *sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul:* all they that *hate Me love death*."[3]

We now see then how it is, that the very same "afflictions," "trials," "tribulations" and "temptations," which "arise for the word's sake," and which serve to "offend" and destroy the unstable professor of the Gospel, only serve to fix the "good ground" hearer more firmly in the truth. They are tests in both cases to discover the nature of the spirit they are of. The fierce assaults and temptations likewise of Satan, which ultimately "drown" the ungodly in "destruction and perdition," only drive the godly more closely to the Lord: and are made use of by Him also to restore them, if fallen, from a backsliding state. And so, when Jesus spake so solemnly of the treachery of Judas, instead of being touched by it, *he* "went immediately out," to "betray" Him:[4] but when "the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter," "*Peter* went out, and wept bitterly."[5] Job said, "When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold:"[6] and he did; for his dross was consumed in "the furnace of affliction." But these are like the house of Israel spoken of by Ezekiel, who had "become dross," "even the dross of silver"[7]—"reprobate silver shall men call them,

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[1] John iii. 18-21. [2] Prov. i. 28-31. [3] Prov. viii. 35, 36. [4] John xiii. 30.
[5] Luke xxii. 61, 62. [6] Job. xxiii. 10. [7] Ezek. xxii. 18.

because Jehovah hath rejected them:"[1] for they have no "new creation" of God in them to work upon. Hence the wise man says, "Though thou shouldest bray *a fool* in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him:"[2] because being an unconverted man, *there is nothing but foolishness in him.* Hence it is "the wise" only who "shall inherit glory; but *shame*" must of necessity "be the promotion of *fools.*"[3]

And now I must bring this lengthy Chapter to a close by a few words of exhortation.

1. To seekers after salvation.

The Word says, "Salvation is far from the wicked: for *they seek not,* Thy statutes."[4] Yet Jesus says, "Ask, and it shall be given you; *seek,* and ye *shall find*; Knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that *seeketh findeth*; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."[5] For "Jehovah is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him: *He also will hear their cry, and will save them.*"[6]

When John Bunyan was under conviction of sin, and was earnestly seeking after the Lord, he tells us in his "Grace abounding to the chief of sinners," "though I was much troubled and tossed, and afflicted with the sight and sense and terror of my own wickedness, yet I was afraid to let this sight and sense go quite off my mind. For I found, that unless guilt of conscience was taken off the right way, that is by the blood of Christ, a man grew rather worse for the loss of his trouble of mind than before. Wherefore if my guilt lay hard upon me, then should I cry that the blood of Christ might take it off; and if it was going off without it (for the sense of sin would be sometimes as if it would die, and go quite away), then I would also strive to fetch it upon my heart again, by bringing the punishment of sin in hell-fire upon my spirit; and would cry, Lord, let it not

[1] Jer. vi. 30. [2] Prov. xxvii. 22. [3] Prov. iii. 35.
[4] Psa. cxix. 155. [5] Mat. vii. 7, 8. [6] Psa. cxlv. 18, 19.

go off my heart, but the right way, by the blood of Christ, and the application of Thy mercy through Him, to my soul; for that Scripture did lay much upon me, 'Without shedding of blood, there is no remission' (Heb. ix. 22). And that which made me the more afraid of this was, because I had seen some, who, though when they were under the wounds of conscience, would cry and pray; yet feeling rather present ease for their trouble, than pardon for their sins, cared not how they lost their guilt, so they got it out of their minds. Now having got it off the wrong way, it was not sanctified unto them; but they grew harder, and blinder, and more wicked after their trouble. This made me afraid, and made me cry to God the more that it might not be so with me."

And his prayer was fully answered, and the Lord most richly blessed him, even beyond his fellows; and he gives this sound counsel to such seekers after salvation themselves. For in his "Law and Grace unfolded," he says:—"This is a legal and old-covenant spirit that secretly persuades the soul that if ever it will be saved by Christ, it must first be fitted for Christ by its getting of a good heart and good intentions to do this and that for Christ; I say, that the soul when it comes to Christ may not be rejected or turned off; when in deed and in truth this is the very way for the soul to turn itself from Jesus Christ, instead of turning to Him; for such a soul looks upon Christ rather to be a painted Saviour or a cypher than a very and real Saviour. Friend, if thou canst fit thyself, what need hast thou of Christ? If thou canst get qualifications to carry to Christ that thou mightst be accepted, thou dost not look to be accepted in the Beloved. Shall I tell thee? Thou art as if a man should say, I will make myself clean, and then I will go to Christ that He may wash me; or like a man possessed, that will first cast the devils out of himself, and then come to Christ for cure from Him. Thou must, therefore, if thou wilt so lay hold of Christ as not to be rejected by Him; I say, thou must come to Him as the basest in the world, more fit to be damned, if thou hadst thy right,

than to have the least smile, hope, or comfort from Him. Come with the fire of hell in thy conscience, Come with thy heart hard, dead, cold, full of wickedness and madness against thy own salvation; come as renouncing all thy fears, prayers, watchings, fastings; even as a blood-red sinner; do not stay from Christ till thou hast a greater sense of thy own misery, nor of the reality of God's mercy; do not stay while thy heart is softer and thy spirit in a better frame, but go against thy mind, and against the mind of the devil and sin, throw thyself down at the foot of Christ, with a halter about thy neck, and say, Lord Jesus, hear a sinner, a hard-hearted sinner, a sinner that deserveth to be damned, to be cast into hell; and resolve never to return, or to give over crying unto Him, till thou do find that He hath washed thy conscience from dead works with His blood virtually, and clothed thee with His own righteousness, and made thee complete in Himself; *this is the way to come to Christ.*" And the good Lord help thee thus to come.

II. To the backslider seeking restoration. Is *this* the thought of thine heart?

> "Depth of mercy, can there be
> Mercy still reserved for me?
> Can my God His wrath forbear?
> Me, the chief of sinners, spare?
>
> "I have long withstood His grace,
> Long provoked Him to His face;
> Would not hearken to His calls:
> Grieved Him by a thousand falls."

If it be, take courage; and come at once to Christ, as you came before. Come as a convinced, wretched, polluted, undone sinner. Come as a lost, helpless, guilty, ruined, backsliding sinner. Come "with weeping and with supplications."[1] Come, confessing "your iniquities," which "have separated between you and your God, and your sins," which "have hid His face from you, that He will not hear."[2] Come again unto Him Whom you "have pierced" with your sins;

[1] Jer. xxxi. 9. [2] Isa. lix. 2.

and "look upon" Him and "mourn."[1] Come, casting away all extenuations of your guilt, and spreading out your sins before Him in all their hideous aggravation. Plead His precious sacrifice for sin; His surpassing love; His infinite "loving-kindness;" the "multitude of His tender mercies;" and ask Him to "blot out" your "transgressions"[2] for His "own sake," and "not" to "remember" your "sins:"[3] for He hath said that, "If we confess our sins," *i.e.*, with an eye to Jesus, Who "bare them in His own body on the tree,"[4] "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."[5] Plead His infinite merits, His spotless righteousness, His boundless, far-reaching "precious promises:"[6] and God, Who "gathereth together the outcasts of Israel,"[7] will gather thee, and "bind" thy "soul" "in the bundle of life with Jehovah thy God:"[8] for "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him."[9] "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive; Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them."[10] But who are the rebellious? Are they not those who have once declared in favour of the King, and have afterwards taken up arms against Him? And are not these also the backsliders? And are there gifts even for *these*, if they throw down their arms in the day of grace, and plead for mercy? Yea, verily: "for" as we have seen, "the gifts and calling of God are without change of purpose"[11] on His part. May the ever-blessed Lord, then, touch thine heart, and graciously constrain thee to cry out,

> "Lord Thou hast won; at length I yield;
> My heart, by mighty grace compelled,
> Surrenders all to Thee:
> Against Thy terrors long I strove,
> But who can stand against Thy love?
> Love conquers even me!"

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[1] Zech. xii. 10. [2] Psa. li. 1. [3] Isa. xliii. 25.
[4] Luke xviii. 13, 14; 1 Pet. ii. 24. [5] 1 John i. 9.
[6] 2 Pet. i. 4. [7] Psa. cxlviii. 2. [8] 1 Sam. xxv. 29.
[9] Heb. vii. 25. [10] Psa. lxviii. 18. [11] Rom. xi. 29.

And now, after I have, in my next Chapter, set forth the distinction between the Servant and the Son, which will be necessary to complete the subject; we will leave the earth, and take a glimpse at the heavens, and "consider" "the moon and the stars, which" God "hath ordained," in the light of the same Divine Word which I have thus been endeavouring to unfold.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SERVANT AND THE SON.

"He saved my soul, He won my heart,
A nature new He gave;
No longer now 'neath judgment found,
No longer Satan's slave!
My bonds are broken, chains are snapped,
And, such His precious love,
The life He gave, lest I should lose,
He safely keeps above.

"Affections new He bids me know,
Yea, gives me of His own;
Not of the earth, or from the earth,
But of and from His throne.
And, lest affections here be set,
Lest earth should win my love,
He rivets on Himself my gaze,
And keeps it all above.

"Faith is His gift, and to me given—
Faith fixed alone on Him,
Who came to make me like Himself,
Not only to redeem.
Of heavenly birth, His sovereign gifts
Of life, and faith, and love,
Are mine indeed, but, blessed facts!
All kept secure above."

"My Lord is in the glory now,
I journey still below,
Yet can my heart commune with Him,
His blessed presence know.
So really linked to Him above,
The things of time oft seem
Like shadows while the Spirit speaks,
Filling my soul with Him.

"Oh what a love is thus revealed,
Unfathomed, without end!
Not a mere servant to obey—
He calleth me *His friend;*
Confides to me the Father's mind—
I'm in 'the secret place,'
Learning His mighty purposes,
Wonders of power and grace!

"Oh blessed haven of quietness
Above earth's troubled roar!
Men's hearts are failing them for fear;
Mine never trembles more:
For I retire alone with Him
Whose will doth all restrain;
I know the wildest storms of earth
Surge round *that* Rock in vain."

"Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of Sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the son abideth ever. If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."—JOHN viii. 34-36.

SOLEMN and awful, yet to the believer in Jesus sweet and blessed, words!—ushered in by an equally solemn asseveration, twice repeated—"Verily, verily, *I* say unto you"—I, who "cannot lie," tell you this. Let these words "sink down into your ears," and touch and melt your hearts!

In a former part of this discourse, from which these words are taken, our Blessed Lord had set Himself forth to the Jews as "the light of the world," apart from Whom all men were "walking in darkness;"[1] and He had told them, that if they "believed not" in Him, they "should die in their sins:"[2] while to those Jews "which believed on Him," He had said, "if ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed: and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."[3]

As usual they completely misinterpreted His words, their carnal hearts being unable to take in the spiritual character of His Divine teaching. And "they answered Him, We be

[1] John viii. 12. [2] John viii. 24. [3] John viii. 31, 32.

Abraham's seed, and were *never* in bondage to *any* man: how sayest thou, ye shall be made *free?*"[1] Appropriating the promises, which were made to Abraham's *spiritual* seed, to themselves as his *natural* descendants, they were unable to comprehend His meaning: for they imagined that they were thereby *free already*. And then "Jesus answered them," in the words before quoted, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Now here Jesus tells them plainly, that all who are in God's house are *not sons*, but that there are *servants* there *as well as sons*. It is the son only who is really a member of the family, and has any right to the inheritance: and this because he is born heir to it. He bears his Father's image and likeness, and his service is the service of *love*. The servant is there in a totally different capacity. *He* serves for *wages*; and although, while in the house, he may frequently partake of many of its outward privileges, yet he has no part in the *inheritance;* and the day must come, when he will have to *leave the house altogether*.

The owner of the house is not Father to the *servant*, but to the *son*. The servant has *another father*, who lives *out of the house*, often at a distance from it; and although the servant's interests may sometimes *seem* to be bound up with those of the family, yet they are not really so: for his interests and his heart are in truth elsewhere.

Jesus would thus solemnly warn these Jews of their fearful condition in *God's* house, and would thereby urge them to avail themselves of the offered remedy pointed out to them, *freedom only in Sonship*—in union with the Divine Son Himself—the "heir of all things."[2] "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

This Gospel, or "good news," however, the Jews *re-*

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[1] John viii. 33. [2] Heb. i. 2.

jected; because they imagined that they had *already* been made partakers of the blessing. "We be Abraham's seed," said they, and are therefore entitled to the promises made to Abraham. "I know that ye are Abraham's seed," said Jesus, *i.e., by nature:* but this will avail you nothing; for the promises are not made to the *natural,* but to the *spiritual* children of Abraham; and ye are *not* the spiritual children of Abraham: for "if ye *were* Abraham's children, ye would do the *works* of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill Me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did *not* Abraham. Ye do the deeds of *your father.*"[1] But "we be not born of fornication." We are in God's house; and therefore "we have one Father, even God."[2] No: God is *not* your Father; because "if *God* were your Father, *ye would love Me*"—the Son of the Father—"for I proceeded forth and came from God."[3] But your hatred to Me shows that, although you are in God's house, you are but *servants* there, and *not sons.* No, God is *not* your Father. "Ye are *of*"—literally "*out of,*" (as 1 John iii. 12)—"*your father the devil,* and the lusts of your father ye will do."[4] You are *the devil's children in God's house;*[5] and the time will come when you will have to be *cast out of it.* For "verily I say unto you," "that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But *the children of the kingdom* shall be *cast out* into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."[6] Yes, "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when *ye* shall *see* Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, *while you yourselves are being thrust out.*"[7]

Now I shall take occasion from these words to consider (1) the servant of sin—"Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin;" (2) the servant (still of sin) in God's house—"the servant abideth not in the house for ever;" and (3) the

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[1] John viii. 39, 41. [2] John viii. 41. [3] John viii. 42. [4] John viii. 44.
[5] See and compare Mat. xiii. 24, 30; 2 Tim. ii. 20; Jude 4.
[6] Mat. viii. 11, 12. [7] So in the original, Luke xiii. 28.

son, the freed man—"but the son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

I. Let me then in the first place consider *the servant of sin*—"Whosoever committeth sin is the servant," δοῦλός, literally, "the *slave* of sin." Awful words! He therefore who is the *greatest sinner*, is in fact the *greatest slave*. Now Satan is no doubt the greatest and most grievous sinner; and Satan, therefore, is the greatest and most abject slave.

Time was when, pleased with his own fancy, and abiding not in God,[1] his "lust," or desire, "conceived, and he brought forth sin"[2]—that monster, which was to rule him with a rod of iron. Deceived by sin, he "said in his heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High."[3] "Yet was he brought down to Sheol, to the sides of the pit."[4] Like the man in the fable, he has made his man, and his man masters him.

And now, what is the end and object of his whole being? Is it not to extend to the utmost the kingdom and dominion of his Master, Sin? This he effects by himself breaking, and, with devilish hatred towards the truth, inciting others also to break, to the utmost the righteous commands of a holy and a blessed God: for "sin is the transgression of the law;"[5] and the transgression of the law is sin: for they are convertible terms. What are the means he makes use of for the accomplishment of that object? With hellish and malicious rage he pours contempt upon the Person and the work of Jesus; "blinding the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them."[6] He invents

[1] John viii. 44. [2] James i. 15.

[3] Isa. xiv. 13, 14. Although this passage no doubt refers, so far as this earth is concerned, to Antichrist; yet I doubt not it refers to Satan also.

[4] Isa. xiv. 15. See also Rev. xx. 1-3. [5] 1 John iii. 4. [6] 2 Cor. iv. 4.

cruel, blasphemous, and lying systems of religion; and induces men to trust in them, that they may despise and reject the truth. With cruel and malignant hate, he plots the utter ruin and destruction of the whole human race; his devilish schemes being so contrived that they may produce the utmost possible misery and wretchedness to man in this world, as well as in the next. He moreover stirs up the evil spirits of men, fans their corruptions to the highest flame, and perpetually dashes them one against another to their destruction. Oh! the floods of blasphemy, vileness, filthiness, murder, cruelty, pride, lawlessness and ungodliness that Satan is continually pouring into the hearts of the children of men to their hurt. He "enlargeth his" sinful "desire as Sheol, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied:"[1] and, had he a power but equal to his will, he would bring down all created intelligences to the same abject slavery as himself; and would drown them in the deep abyss of hell for ever. O sinner, if you could but see, that Satan, in all his most alluring temptations to thee, means nothing less than the utter destruction of thy body, soul and spirit to all eternity, thou wouldest flee from them as from a hissing, hellish serpent![2]

Does he propose any final rest or ease, then, to himself from his conduct? None whatever. He knows full well that every stroke he aims at the glorious Godhead will only recoil with tenfold fury upon his own head—that every wound he inflicts upon God's people, will ultimately be retaliated, if I may so speak, by a sin-avenging God, with far more tremendous power upon himself—that all his schemes of dishonouring the Lord Jesus, or of finally hindering the complete triumph of His kingdom, will prove utterly abortive. But yet he perseveres. Why? Because Sin, his Master, holds him captive in its iron grasp. Sin hurries him forward in his mad career. Sin plunges him deeper

[1] Hab. ii. 5.

[2] See the Writer's "Personality and History of Satan," advertised at the end of this volume.

and deeper, in the abyss of woe. If you were to see a serpent attempting to swallow a larger animal than itself; its jaws separated from each other even at their base by the immense effort; with an abundant supply of saliva constantly pouring out upon its victim to assist in the loathsome process; until with enormously distended mouth, it seems absolutely gorged with putrefaction; presenting a hideous and disgusting spectacle of gluttony and repulsiveness—then might you see Satan himself, that "Serpent who was more subtle than any beast of the field,"[1] attempting to swallow up the world itself, and its inhabitants!

And if you could have seen that same serpent, having miscalculated its powers, burst asunder by the unnatural effort—then might you in faith see Satan, when the Lord Jesus scatters down confusion upon him like ashes; when his subtle schemes are blasted, his cunning handiwork destroyed, his tangled web unwoven, his building levelled with the dust, and all his devilish projects shivered to atoms; while he himself is laid hold of, and plunged down deep into the burning wrath of God for ever.[2] "Man knows *the beginning* of sin," said Francis Spira, the apostate, "but who can bound *the issues* thereof?" The beginning of sin was, it would seem, the thought of pride in the breast of a mighty angel.[3] The issues thereof, who can tell? "He that committeth sin is *the slave* of sin."

But Satan has long since been cast out of God's house; and for him there is no return to it. It is not, however, so with man. Let me consider the passage then in its aspect towards him.

In one sense man may be considered to be a greater servant even than Satan: because man, like Canaan of old, is "a servant of servants,"[4] a slave of slaves; aye, and a servant of the greatest servant, a slave of the greatest slave: for he is not only the slave of sin, but the slave of the slave of sin! He is in "the snare of the devil" himself, and is

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[1] Gen. iii. 1. [2] Rev. xx. 10. [3] 1 Tim. iii. 6. [4] Gen. ix. 25.

"taken captive by him at his will."[1] He is moreover in a *willing bondage:* for this "strong man armed keepeth his palace"—the poor sinner's heart—"in peace."[2] Alas! poor soul, he is "saying, peace, peace; when there is no peace:"[3] for how can *he* be at peace, who lies under the curse of the broken law of God?[4] As the wretched African slave (if one could picture so infatuated an instance in real life), is led down to the shore, drugged with intoxicating drink, and singing in his chains; while he heeds not, that he is to be thrust between the miserable mid-decks of the slave ship, and at length, it may be, to be cast out battered, bruised, and broken, into the deep;—so the sinner, in a far worse bondage, led on by his wily captor, sings as he is lured onwards to destruction; and dreams not of his danger until the gulph opens wide at his feet, and he drops down into darkness, deep "in the depths of hell"![5]

But alas! unconverted men are so blinded and "hardened by the deceitfulness of sin,"[6] that they do not in general admit this fact. Like the Jews of old, to whom our Lord addressed these words, they say, "We be Abraham's seed, and were *never in bondage to any man:* how sayest Thou, ye shall be *made free?*"[7] How *could* the Jews have said they had *never* been in bondage to *any* man? Had they not been "brought out from" Egypt, from "*the house of bondage?*"[8] Had they not been in bondage on various occasions during the times of the Judges, making up a period of 131 years? Had they not been carried away captive to Babylon, and been in bondage there? And even when our Lord spoke to them, had not "the sceptre departed from Judah;"[9] and were they not even *then* under the dominion of the Romans? And how can the sinner say so? Is he not "altogether born in sins?"[10] Is he not "tied and bound with the chain of his sins?" Is he not under the dominion of "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now energizeth in the

[1] 2 Tim. ii. 26. [2] Luke xi. 21. [3] Jer. vi. 14. [4] Gal. iii. 10.
[5] Prov. ix. 18. [6] Heb. iii. 13. [7] John viii. 33. [8] Exod. xiii. 14.
[9] Gen. xlix. 10. [10] John ix. 34.

children of disobedience," or, unbelief?[1] And what bondage can be worse than this? And as such does not "the wrath of God abide on him"?[2] Satan knows full well *his* bondage; and "the demons believe and tremble:"[3] but the sinner is, alas! but too often unconscious of *his!* As a man who swims down a rapid current is unconscious of the force of the stream; so the sinner who follows "the sinful devices and desires of his own evil heart," is ignorant of the mighty power of that sin, to whose seductive influences he has yielded up his willing spirit. Oh, how many myriads of poor sinners are thus gliding silently, yet swiftly, down the stream of sin to death!

Spiritually he is moreover "*dead* in trespasses and sins;"[4] and is incapable of feeling the awful nature of his position. Like Lazarus, he has been laid in the tomb, and "by this time he stinketh:"[5] and it is only when the mighty Word of Jesus reaches a sinner's inmost spirit, and wakes him from the sleep of death, that he finds this so to be. And even when the "dead comes forth," like Lazarus also, he feels that he is still "bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face is bound about with a napkin."[6] "I was alive," says Paul, "without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."[7] "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me."[8] "O wretched man that I am!" saith he, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death"—or this body of death—this dead body, *i.e.*, of sin? "I thank God," he adds, "through Jesus Christ our Lord:"[9] Who never fails, in His own good time, to say of every truly converted soul, as he said also of Lazarus, "Loose him, and let him go."[10]

Another reason why sinners do not always feel the bitter bondage of their unconverted state is because of the restraining hand of God upon them for their sins, keeping them within bounds. But ofttimes when sinners have abused

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[1] Eph. ii. 2. [2] John iii. 36. [3] James ii. 19. [4] Eph. ii. 1.
[5] John xi. 39. [6] John xi. 44. [7] Rom. vii. 9. [8] Rom. vii. 21.
[9] Rom. vii. 24, 25. [10] John xi. 44.

their privileges, and sinned greatly against the light; while their hearts still follow after their idols, God deals with them as He dealt with Israel of old: for when they "rejoiced in the works of their own hands," "God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven:"[1] and thus does He deal with these. He turns, and gives them up to the power of their idols, and lets their sin have full dominion over them: and now they become "the servants," or slaves, "of corruption," and are "brought into bondage" indeed![2] Now God's restraining hand being removed, sin runs riot within them, and bursts out beyond all bounds; and like "the lions" in "the den," it not only "has the mastery of them," but it "breaks all their bones in pieces, or ever they come *at the bottom of the den.*"[3]

Has the man yielded himself up to the seductive power of drink? His sin is bringing him to poverty. No matter, he must have his drink. It is alienating from him all his best friends. No matter, he must have his drink. It is poisoning his domestic happiness. No matter, he must have his drink. It is undermining his constitution, and destroying his health. No matter, the unnatural craving must at all hazards be gratified. But it will be the destruction of his body, soul and spirit in hell for ever.[4] The Master, Sin, says, "Drink on, mad fool, drink on." And the wretched sinner *sees* and *feels* himself to be a mad fool; and yet he drinks on still! Mr. James Miller, the surgeon in ordinary to the Queen in Scotland, records the case of a drunkard who said, "If a bottle of brandy stood at the end of the table, and the pit of hell yawned at the other, and I were convinced that I should be pushed in so soon as I took but one glass, I could not refrain."[5] "Yes: he that committeth sin is *the slave* of sin."

Is he a lascivious man? His eyes are "in all evil in the midst of the congregation;"[6] "having eyes full of adultery,

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[1] Acts vii. 41, 42. [2] 2 Pet. ii. 19. [3] Dan. vi. 24. [4] 1 Cor. vi. 10.
[5] Alcohol: its Place and Power, p. 34. [6] Prov. v. 14.

and that cannot cease from sin."[1] "Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart."[2] His sin pushes him on to do deeds at which he would once have shuddered. It renders him utterly selfish, filthy, cruel, and deceitful. Vice follows in his track; and unless a miracle of mercy intervene, he becomes a polluting source of misery, wretchedness, and crime; and the awful command at length goes forth against him, "he that is filthy, let him be filthy still."[3]

But sin ceases not its hold upon the lost sinner in time. No; if he "die in his sin," it follows him also into eternity: *and here its ascendancy over him is complete.* Now all outward restraints and opposing hindrances being removed, sin's dominion over the lost soul becomes unlimited and eternal! One of the most fearful and horrible torments of the lost will be this:—all the passions of the soul, so far from being extinguished, will be terribly increased: and herein lies the hellishness of the sting, there can now no longer be any gratification of them! In this life, where the soul is given up to any vile passion there is some ease or satisfaction in the gratification of it, wretched though it may be, it satisfies for a time: but in hell it will be different. There all the vile passions of the soul have increased with tenfold fury; and as there will be no means of allaying them, even for a moment by gratification, the bitter mortification of them will roll back with sickening horror upon the sin-polluted soul, and plunge it ever into anguish, awful, and intolerable. Then will the wretched soul fully realize in its own terrible experience the awful truth of these fearful words of our Lord—"He that committeth sin is *the slave of sin!*"

II. But let me pass on to consider *the servant* (still of sin) *in God's house:* for you see our Lord here speaks of *the same character*, only *under different circumstances.* "He that committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant" (the same character you see) "abideth not in the house for

[1] 2 Pet. ii. 14. [2] Hos. iv. 11. [3] Rev. xxii. 11.

ever: but the son" (a different character altogether) "abideth ever."

Here then we have *the servant of sin in God's house:* and inasmuch as when he gets into the house, God makes use of his service and pays him wages for it, he is said in a certain sense to be *God's* servant; yet not in the same sense in which the Lord's own children are so reckoned: for their service, like that of Jesus Himself, is a willing service; and having an eternal interest in the house, they seek the glory and the good of it, and not their own glory. But the servant, who has no such interest in it,[1] does not do this. He seeks his *own* ends, and his *own* glory; and therefore he is *but* a servant. This is what he works for, and God pays him his wages, and he is satisfied with them. "Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward."[2] As it was said of Abraham, "of the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave *gifts*, and *sent them away from Isaac his son*, while he yet lived;" but "unto Isaac," the child of promise, "Abraham gave *all that he had*," even *the inheritance;*[3] so the Lord deals with these. The *servants* are sent away with *gifts*, but *the inheritance* is given to *the son*, who never could rest satisfied with the Father's gifts only. It is the Father Himself who can alone satisfy *him*. It is quite true that the Father scatters His gifts both amongst the sons, as well as the servants: but the servants have gifts *only*. The sons have *grace* also, which the servants *never had*.

The awful truth, then, which our blessed Lord would teach us, and have us deeply to ponder over (and which we have already seen exemplified in previous Chapters) is *this*—that there are *servants* in God's house, who are *not* sons, and who will, therefore, one day *have to leave it*. "The servant abideth *not* in the house *for ever*."

Thus the servant, as we see, *enters* into God's house *as a servant*, and not as a Son; and not having been "*born*" in

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[1] Mat. xxv. 24, 27; John x. 1, 8, 10, 12, 13. [2] Mat. vi. 5.
[3] Gen. xxv. 5, 6.

the house, he is not, therefore, related to the Master of it. He enters in under covenant to serve for wages, and he binds himself to do what is required of him, being self-sufficient enough to think that he is fully competent to perform it. And so entering the house upon this principle, he receives from the Master of it goods and gifts to lay out for His use; but being by nature "a wicked and slothful servant," instead of employing these for his Master's use, he employs them for *his own* use, and wastes them on himself. The servant, therefore, is one who is *still* "*under the law*," while *professing* to live by the rules of the Gospel;[1] and being both by nature and by practice a "transgressor of the law," he, by his *continued* unbelief, "*abides* under wrath,"[2] and is at length deprived of his stewardship, and "cast out" of the house, as an "unprofitable servant."[3]

This servant, then, is one who has gifts from God *only*, and no grace: and alas! there are many such in God's house. We have already seen this exemplified: but let me refer to some further Scriptural illustrations and examples of it; and may the good Lord, who reveals all such truths for our warning and profit, bless the consideration of them to our souls.

The apostle Paul tells us, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, that it is possible to "speak with the tongues of men and of angels," and yet "not to have charity," or "the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost."[4] A man, he says, may "have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge," and yet after all be destitute of this great grace that "never faileth." Nay, he says, he may have "all faith, so that he could remove mountains," and still be without the grace of God, and be "nothing:"[5] for the faith of miracles is not saving faith. Saving faith, and saving faith alone is "holy faith," "the

[1] See his doom, and the reason given for it by the Lord Himself when He comes again.—Psa. l. 16-21.

[2] John iii. 36. [3] Mat. xxv. 30. [4] Rom. v. 5. [5] 1 Cor. xiii. 1-2.

faith of God's elect."[1] Mat. vii. 22, 23, compared with 2 Tim. ii. 19, which we have already considered, clearly prove this. No, gifts are not grace; and not necessarily connected with it either. What the Lord looks for is not knowledge, but love. "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity" (or love) "edifieth" (or buildeth up).[2] And therefore, it is said, "But ye beloved"—contrasting them with the "sensual" ones, "having *not* the Spirit"—"building up yourselves *in your most holy faith*, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."[3] Yes, what the Lord looks for is *fruit*, not *leaves*." "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard"—it does not say that *He* planted it—"and he came and sought fruit thereon." His eyes peered up and down among its branches—those "eyes" that are "as a flame of fire,"[4] lighting up all before them: for "all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do"[5]—they pierced through and through all the thicknesses of that leafy foliage, looking for fruit, "and *found none*."[6] We know the issue, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground:"[7] for "every plant that My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."[8]

"The servant *abideth not* in the house *for ever*." How long does he abide in it, and when is he cast out of it? Some abide in it for a longer time than others. Some are cast out of it in this life: others remain in it until death. "Some men's sins are *open beforehand*, going before to judgment; and some men *they follow after*."[9] Nevertheless "*every* branch in me that beareth *not* fruit, He taketh away."[10] He doesn't say that it hadn't *leaves*, but that it hadn't *fruit*: for *this* is what He looks for. LEAVES there often are on such branches in abundance: but fruit none. In Scripture the *leaf* is an emblem of *profession*, *fruit* of *grace*. Thus it is said of the "*Blessed* man," that "he shall be like a tree

[1] Jude 20; Titus i. 1. [2] 1 Cor. viii. 1. [3] Jude 19-21.
[4] Rev. i. 14; ii. 18. [5] Heb. iv. 12. [6] Luke xiii. 6.
[7] Luke xiii. 7. [8] Matt. xv. 13. [9] 1 Tim. v. 24. [10] John xv. 2.

planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his *fruit* in his season; his *leaf* also shall not wither: and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."[1] And fruit you see is put *before* leaf—grace before knowledge and profession. "For with *the heart* man *believeth* unto righteousness; and with *the mouth* "*confession* is made unto salvation."[2] But "the ungodly," he says, "are *not so*." And therefore he says again, that *they* "shall not stand in the judgment;" but will have to be cast out of God's house from among "the congregation of the righteous."[3]

We have a notable illustration of this in the Gospel of St. Mark; where we find it recorded that on a certain occasion, on our Lord's return from Bethany, "He was hungry: and seeing a fig tree afar off *having leaves*, He came, if haply He might find anything thereon: and when He came to it He found *nothing but leaves;* for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus *answered* and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever." "And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree *dried up from the roots*."[4] Now observe, this fig tree was very *flourishing* in its *appearance*, so much so indeed that it could be seen "afar off:" but yet after all the searching eye of our Lord at once discovered that it was *destitute of fruit*. It did, as it were, speak with a loud voice in Christ's ear, "Lord, is not this sufficient? Is not this flourishing outward appearance enough?" But "Jesus *answered*, and said unto it"—just as if He had said "No: I come seeking *fruit*. If thou hast not *this* thou hast *nothing*." And then comes forth the awful sentence, that none might thereafter be deceived by its specious appearances of good, and its empty performance of it—"Let no man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever," followed by the fearful consequence to the rejected object itself, "In the morning as they passed by, they saw the fig tree *dried up from the roots*"—an awful emblem of the fruitless professor given up to the curse of the law—"Master,

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[1] Psa. i. 3. [2] Rom. x. 10. [3] Psa. i. 4, 5. [4] Mark xi. 12, 14, 20.

behold the fig tree which thou *cursedst* is withered away! and Jesus answering saith unto them, Have *faith* in God;" as if He had said, "Take warning, and seek that faith, which worketh by love, that you may be fruthful in good works; and never rest in an outside show of religion, without its inward life and power and reality, which can only spring from union with Me by a living, holy, saving faith in Me." "For verily I say unto you," "Unto everyone that hath shall be given," "but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."[1] This *seems* paradoxical: for how can there be *taken from* anyone that which he *hath not?* The parallel passage, however, fully explains it—"Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given: and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he *seemeth* to have," or "which he *thinketh* that he hath:"[2] for the word means both. Ah! now all is clear. "To him that *hath*"—*grace*—"shall be given"—more grace—"the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."[3] "But to him that *hath not*"—*grace*—"shall be taken from him that which he hath;" and with this necessarily also that which he *thought* that he had, but which truly he only *seemed* to have. What had he then? As a *servant*, he had *light* and *knowledge* and *gifts;* and *because* he had *these*, he *thought* himself, and it *seemed* to others also who could not spiritually discern, that he *was* likewise A SON, and that therefore he had *grace also:* but *this* he *had not.* When therefore there is taken from him that which he *had, i.e.*, his *gifts*; there will then at once go with them that which he *seemed* to have, but had *not, grace.* And now without light, gifts, grace, he may be seen also "*without fruit, twice dead,* plucked up by the roots,"[4] rotting upon the dunghill of the world!

Surely there can no greater misery befal a man than to have light and gifts, power and influence, *without grace.*

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[1] Matt. xxv. 29. [2] Luke viii. 18. [3] 1 Pet. i. 13. [4] Jude 12.

"Such great ones," it has been truly said, "make a brave show here like field officers at the head of their regiments, but when the army is beaten, like miserable cowards they fling away scarf and feather, and would be glad to pass for the meanest soldier: but then it may not be." No. "These shall receive greater damnation."[1]

Are God's gifts then to be dreaded or despised? Oh! No, but to be used for God's honour and glory, and not for our own. The Apostle says even to that Church which had most abused its gifts, the Church of Corinth, "Covet earnestly the *best* gifts;" and why? Because gifts are for the good of others, and not for ourselves, and they make a man more useful and blessed, if he use them, as God would have him use them, for God's glory, and the good of souls. "And yet," says he, "shew I unto you *a more excellent way*"[2]—the way of 'charity," or "love." As if he had said, "See that you have *grace* as well as *gifts*; aye, and see that your grace predominates above your gifts." "For the soul," indeed, "to be without knowledge is not good;"[3] but it is *destruction* to be *without grace*. And, therefore, it is said, "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."[4] Grace *first*, knowledge *next*. Hence it was said of John the Baptist, that "he was a *burning* and a *shining* light"[5]—burning first, shining next. But how many would have preferred the shining to the burning! Ah! do not you. Seek to have your heart right with God, and all will be well: "for out of it are the issues of life."[6] Seek to be truly convinced of the evil of sin, of its filthiness, its heinousness, its hellishness, &c. Seek to be truly convinced of the misery and desperate danger of an unconverted state. Seek to be truly convinced of the insufficiency and inability of any thing but Jesus Christ Himself to minister relief to your soul in this case. And never rest satisfied with convictions, till they end in conversion. The knowledge

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[1] Matt. xxiii. 14. [2] 1 Cor. xii. 31. [3] Prov. xix. 2. [4] 2 Pet. iii. 18.
[5] John v. 35. [6] Prov. iv. 23. See also Matt. xii. 33-35.

of the disease is not the cure. Oh to be delivered from thy sin! its guilt, its dominion, its power! Is this thy cry? Hast thou ever felt its burden, its baseness, its vileness, its filthiness, its bitterness, its hellishness? "To *you*" then, oh! "to you, is the word of this Salvation sent."[1] "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved."[2] "For He saveth them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him."[3] And He "is able to subdue all things" (even thy stubborn heart) "to Himself."[4]

But I ought not to dismiss this subject, without shewing *how* a professor *becomes a servant in God's house.* And I cannot do it better than in the language of John Bunyan, who in his "The law and grace unfolded," thus speaks on this point:—"That thou mightest be indeed satisfied herein, I shall shew you the very manner and way that a legal, or old-covenant-converted professsor (bear with the terms), doth take both in the beginning, middle, and the end of his doing any duty or command, or whatsoever it be that he doth. 1: He thinking this or that to be his duty, and considering of the same, he is also presently persuaded in his own conscience that God will not accept of him if he leave it undone; he seeing that he is short of his duty, as he supposeth, while this is undone by him, and also judging that God is angry with him until the thing be done, he, in the second place, sets to the doing of his duty, to the end he may be able to pacify his conscience by doing of the same, persuading of himself that now the Lord is pleased with him for doing of it. 2: Having done it, he contents himself, sits down at his ease, until some further convictions of his duty to be done, which when he seeth and knoweth, he doth do it as aforesaid, from the same principle as he did the former, and so goeth on in his progress of profession. This is *to do things from a legal principle*"—or, in other words, *to act as a servant in God's house*—"and from an old-covenant spirit; for thus runs that covenant, 'The man

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[1] Acts xiii. 26. [2] Acts xvi. 31. [3] Heb. vii. 25. [4] Phil. iii. 21.

that doeth these things shall live in them,' or 'by them. Lev. xviii. 5; Ezek. xx. 11." *How* the sinner *should come* to Christ, I have shewn already in a former Chapter.

III. And now I come in the last place to consider the son—the freed man—"but the son abideth" (*i.e.* in the house), "for ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

And here you will observe a remarkable *similarity*, combined with a no less remarkable *contrast*, between these two divisions of our Lord's discourse. In the former division, the *same character* is spoken of under two *different aspects*. In this latter division two *different persons* are spoken of, and yet they are viewed as but *one*, and looked at in the *same aspect*. "But the son" (*i.e.*, every sinner who is "born of God," and who thereby becomes "a son of God,") "abideth" (in the house) "for ever. If the Son therefore" (the same phrase you see, but meaning here, the Son of God Himself, Jesus Christ, the Saviour,) "shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed"—*i.e.*, you shall have "power" —as we have it in the first Chapter of this Gospel—or the right, or authority (as the margin has it), "to become the sons of God;" and shall thereby become entitled to all the privileges of son-ship, through the Son of God Himself —and that by being "*born*" to the inheritance, as it is there also said again—"which were *born*, not of blood," (or through natural ancestral descent) "nor of the will of the flesh," (nor through any power derivable from Adam, either natural or acquired, physical or mental) "nor of the will of man," (nor through any human instrumentality whatever, Ecclesiastical or otherwise) "but *of God*"[1] alone.

Here then we have the Divine truth taught us of *the oneness of the believer with Jesus;* and that it is by virtue of our *union* with Him in the everlasting Covenant—a union which is accomplished, and manifested to believers, on their being "born again, of the Spirit," and being grafted, by that

[1] John i. 12, 13.

one Spirit into Christ their living Head—that we are entitled to all the privileges and blessings which He has wrought out for us.

The reason then *why the son* abideth in the house for ever is, because he is "*born*" there. "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the Highest Himself shall establish her."[1] He is not a *servant* in the house; but *a son*—born of the Father—"*born of God*"[2]—and is a partaker therefore of His image and likeness. He is born likewise "*heir*" to the Father's estate, and in due time he will enter into possession of it.

It is quite true that while under age, he is under authority, as it is written, "Now, I say, that the heir, as long as he is *a child*, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be Lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father. Even so we," says the Apostle, "when *we* were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:" (or the first principles, or rudiments of instruction, given chiefly through the law.[3]) "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that *we* might receive the adoption of *sons*. And because ye *are* sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but *a son;* and *if a son, then an heir* of God through Christ."[4]

The Son therefore is one who is *born in the house*; and as such, is *an heir to the inheritance; because* he is *one with the Divine Son*, Who is "*heir of all things*,"[5] and it is in and through Him, *and by virtue of his union with Him* that he has thus become *a freed man*, and is so entitled: as it is written again, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been

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[1] Psa. lxxxvii. 5. [2] John i. 13; iii. 8.
[3] See and compare Col. ii. 20, with Gal. iii. 24, and Rom. x. 4.
[4] Gal. iv. 1-7. [5] Heb. i. 2.

baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all *one in Christ Jesus.* And if ye be Christ's, *then* are ye *Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*"[1] "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."[2]

The Son then, we see, is a totally *different character* from the servant; and he is in a totally *different position* in the Father's house. He knows his Father as such, and his Father acknowledges him to be his son. Now "no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.*"[3] Now the Father is revealed to the son, by the Divine Son, through the ever-blessed Spirit, as we read just now in Galatians; and as we have it also set forth in Romans, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the Spirit of bondage," δουλείας, servant-ship, "again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption," υἱοθεσίας, son-ship, "*whereby we cry,* Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are *the children of God:* and if children, then *heirs;* heirs of God, *and joint-heirs with Christ*; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."[4]

Now there are three things revealed to the son (more or less distinctly), of which the servant knows nothing, I mean of course, savingly and effectually, *i.e.*; (1) the blood of Christ; (2) the righteousness of Christ; and (3) the believer's union with Christ. I shall therefore here, as in previous cases, give a living example by way of illustration of the subject; and we have a remarkable one to hand in the record of the life and experience of the late Rev. Alexander Anderson, a

[1] Gal. iii. 26-29. [2] 1 Cor. iii. 21-23. [3] Matt. xi. 27. [4] Rom. viii. 14-17.

Minister of the Free Church of Scotland: as these three things were revealed to him with wonderful distinctness, and, as we shall see, at three different periods in his spiritual history.

1. And first let me speak of the revelation to him of *the blood of Christ.*

On Monday the 20th of May, 1850, he is writing a lecture for the Presbytery—Subject: Rom. viii. 6, "To be carnally minded is death," &c. "Began," he says, "by taking a view of the preceding verses of the Chapter, and had written in my common-place book the following remarks on a passage in the Chapter, in order to have materials for a complete view of the Apostle's reasoning, little imagining what was in store for me. 'Rom. viii. 3.—The law could not justify, for the conscience was weak and altogether defiled and condemned to die. What, then, was to be done? God sent forth His Son, and in His flesh deprived the sin in our flesh of its power to condemn or tyrannise. He made it as good as dead, so that, all who are in Christ, the sin which continues in their flesh and blood inherited from Adam, can no longer hurt.'

"I had written this with the assistance of Bengel's Exegesis of the passage in his Gnomon, for which I shall have cause to bless the Lord evermore, that He should have directed me to purchase it; but after I had written it and read it over, I was not conscious of any enlargement.

"This was in the afternoon. I then proceeded to examine more carefully the meaning of the expression '*περὶ ἁμαρτίας*,' which is rendered in our version 'for sin.' I was not satisfied with this. I again looked into Bengel, and found it rendered 'pro peccato'—in its character as sin. I then read what I had written in my common-place book on Rom. viii. 3, and when I had done so, such a light dawned upon me, that I can compare it to nothing in my former experience. I seized my pen and wrote as follows, under my remarks on the passage:—

"'I see this as I never saw it before. How glorious!'

And I then wrote:—'6 P.M.—I have got such a view of the crucifixion of sin—of its life's blood being now shed—as I never had before. I now see how His name—the second Adam—has a most peculiar meaning. I now see how the sins in my flesh—the sins of all whose eyes He has opened, have been crucified to their very core, and deprived of all their power to condemn by being condemned and put to death in the pure and holy flesh of Jesus. I now see that all my past views of my Redeemer have been most inadequate. I never until now saw what was meant by sin having been pierced to the heart—having had its poison taken out—by the sword of Divine justice being plunged into the Saviour's side, by being crucified with Christ, by having been baptised into His death. It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.' And I know not how my eyes should have been enlightened at this particular time. The illumination came upon me, not in immediate answer to prayer, for I had not breathed up one for some time, but altogether unawares. I have been blind in regard to the spiritual meaning of the atonement, up to this time; the idea of such a glorious doctrine had never got beyond my understanding or imagination. Now I see, in some measure, what it was that prompted that loud cry of agony: 'My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me.' My heart has now been opened to feel how precious those great drops of blood were which fell from the agonised Redeemer in the garden. The Spirit of the Lord has done it, and it is all of *grace*. I was perfectly *passive*. 'Not to me, O Lord, not to me.' 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is *liberty*,' *and I now feel there is*. I cannot deny my consciousness. I cannot shut my eyes to the lovingkindness of the Lord. Truly, 'as the wind bloweth where it listeth, so is *every one* that is *born of the Spirit*.'"[1]

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[1] Life in the Spirit: a Memorial of the Rev. Alex. Anderson, M.A., pp. 9-12.

2. The second revelation to him was with respect to *the Righteousness of Christ*: and it happened on this wise. About a month after the first precious discovery to him of the value of the blood, *i.e.*, on the evening of Wednesday, the 19th of June in the same year, 1850, "While engaged," he says, "with my discourse on 'The Lord our Righteousness,' got a view of the righteousness of God, which up to this time I had understood as mere human teaching can make me understand it. *I had felt the old enmity slain, by having got a sight of the blood shedding*; I had felt that I could love God as I never could do previously, *but I was still awkward in the matter of imputed righteousness.* But on reading Rom. iii. 25, 26, I saw the thing most clearly. Thus is the Lord teaching me not to be satisfied with mere human teaching, but ever to aim at being 'taught of Him.' And in His great wisdom He is not revealing all at once, but speaking in 'sundry portions and in divers manners.' Oh the lovingkindness of the Father in making redemption feel so sweet! Here is the theory: When God justifies, He does so, *not with His essential righteousness, but with a righteousness that is* COMMUNICABLE. This righteousness has a twofold effect: it propitiates God for sins that are past, and thus slays the enmity in every heart that believes, or is enabled to believe, that He is so propitiated; and it is also declared sufficient for all time coming as a covering to conceal the filthy rags of our righteousness—what Paul held as loss and dung that he might be found in Christ, not having *his own* righteousness, but *that which is of the faith of Christ even the righteousness which is of God by faith.* Now I feel I have a breast-plate. Now, by the tender mercy of my Father, I am delivered from guilt, and not only so, but justified."[1]

"Strange that when God exhibits to the gaze of all His own righteousness, that they may lay hold of it, so few do really lay hold of it. The reason is, their eyes are blinded,

[1] Life in the Spirit, pp. 101-2.

and they have not yet had revealed to them by the Spirit of God the things that are *freely* given to them of God."[1]

3. The third revelation to him was with respect to his *union with Christ:* and it was made to him about four months, later, *i.e.*, on the Lord's Day of the 5th of October in the same year, 1850. Writing on Psalm xcii., he says:—"Those who are planted in the house or vineyard of the Lord are all of the Lord's planting. But before they could have been quickened, and then grown, they must needs have died. And they did die; they died with Jehovah-Jesus—they were baptised into his death.

"But (oh, still more wondrous!) I at this moment see that they were with Jesus *before he died;* with Him *when He was obeying the law in its every requirement* (oh, glorious! glorious!)—and after finishing all with Him, going down to death with Him, and being with Him in his death, and then rising with Him from the grave, and ascending with Him and sitting with Him in heavenly places (Eph. ii. 6). *We are virtually in the heavens—for Christ is there;* and after a while we shall see Him, not by faith, but face to face—see Him as He is.

"O most memorable Lord's day!—the *third* grand transition in my spiritual history. The Lord be magnified! the Lord be magnified! This is indeed glorious; But, my soul, by faith thou standest—pray evermore that thy faith fail not. I live if I stand fast in the Lord, joined to Him by a faith which He even now giveth to those who wait upon Him.

"But while I see this clearly now, yet I have been taught it by sundry portions and in divers manners. I write at two o'clock in the afternoon, and although in the morning I saw that there was a righteousness provided, and a salvation offered without money and without price, and although *I felt that I was joined to Christ by His Spirit being in me* to open up this mystery, yet I looked upon the atone-

[1] Life in the Spirit, pp. 102-3.

ment and righteousness *too much apart from Christ*, the Living Saviour—much, I am sure, to my loss.

"This morning, however, in thinking of believers being 'planted' in the Lord's house, I was led to retrace the steps by which the Lord, in His great mercy, had conducted me. I thought not so much of the Lord's purpose in regard to me, as to the actual history of my experiences. *I felt that I was planted in the house of the Lord—that I was growing by the life which I received from the Spirit of Christ.* But that which is sown or planted is not quickened except it die —and how did I die? *I was from eternity planted with Christ in the likeness of his death in the purpose of God;* but relatively to my own intelligent soul, I died spiritually with Him, after He had made me alive. Then I saw after I had been thus *crucified with Christ*, that I must be made like to Him in all things. Now, how had Jesus gone to Calvary? As a living man; and thus was I led to see that in order to my dying with Christ—that is, in order to my resting intelligently on the death of Christ, and seeing that that death was endured for me—it was necessary for me to be a living man too. I felt that I had to be with Christ while He was yet alive. But I was not conducted further in the morning. *Now, blessed be the Lord! I now see that I was with Him in His birth—with Him in doing His Father's will in all things—with Him in fulfilling all righteousness—in one word, that wherever He is, and whatever He has done, there am I, and that have I done.* THERE IS PERFECT ONENESS BETWEEN US."[1]

"And now in regard to personal holiness. . . . . Even after we are satisfied with the righteousness of Christ, we may be still afraid that we shall not be personally holy. Well, by all means give diligence to make your calling and election sure, but remember, at the same time, *that the very same union to Christ*, which makes us partakers of His righteousness, makes Him also our *sanctification*. For

[1] Life in the Spirit, pp. 120-2.

Christ is made unto us of God, not righteousness only, but sanctification also. *Surely this is enough to set me at liberty.* Yes: when it is made *of God* to me . . . . . Why then should the believer be cast down? His life is hid with Christ in God, and he cannot perish."[1]

And now I would ask my readers if this record be not a *living* comment upon these blessed words of our Divine Lord, "But the Son abideth" (in the house) "for ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, *ye shall be free indeed*"?

But inasmuch as the Son, while yet a child, is, as we have seen, "under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the Father;" and as this same Apostle tells us in another place, is likewise *chastened* of the Father—"For what Son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?"[2] —the subject demands that I should touch somewhat upon this point also: for speaking to the sons, another Apostle says, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."[3]

It is the Lord's appointment that faith should be *tried.* Indeed its genuineness can be tested in no other way—"that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."[4] But as we have also seen, you may "bray *a fool*" (or an unconverted person) "in a mortar among wheat, with a pestle, yet will not *his* foolishness *depart from him*"[5]—because he is *nothing but a fool* (or unconverted person) *only.* When, therefore, a work of grace appears to have been accomplished in any soul, after a while the Evil One is permitted to test it by trial, tempta-

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[1] Life in the Spirit, pp. 123-4. [2] Heb. xii. 7.
[3] 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13. [4] 1 Pet. i. 7. [5] Prov. xxviii. 22.

tion or conflict. If it be of God, it will abide the trial: if it be not of God, it will come to naught and perish. "The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but Jehovah trieth the hearts."[1] Those who cannot abide the trial are finally cast away (as we have seen), as *ἀδόκιμοί*, or unapproved. "Reprobate silver shall men call them, because Jehovah hath rejected them."[2] Those who abide it, are God's *δόκιμοι*, or approved ones. Their dross only has been consumed in the process, and the fine gold of faith has come out only the finer. The Refiner Himself, Who put them in the furnace, has sat by them, until He has seen His own blessed image reflected in them: and then they have come forth, as from God's own mint, stamped with the signet seal of heaven.[3] "There *must be* heresies among you," says the Apostle, "that they which are *approved* may be *made manifest* among you."[4] "Him that *overcometh* will I make *a pillar* in the temple of my God, *and he shall go no more out:* and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him My new name."[5]

It would be foreign to my purpose, and would extend this Chapter to too great a length, if I were to enter fully into these trials of the son. Suffice it to say, that *in general* Satan's siftings of *the son* are usually different from those which he employs with *the servant*. To "the *servant* in the house," he says, "You need not be alarmed. *You* are all right. Look at your *knowledge*. Look at your *gifts*. Have you not a far keener insight into Divine truth than such and such a person? You may rely upon it that *you* are high up in grace." And these subtle suggestions, falling in with the temper of his own vain and proud heart, puff him up with vain conceit; and the devil, by thus keeping him looking at the *fruits* of *knowledge*, holds him off from the

[1] Prov. xvii. 3. [2] Jer. vi. 30.
[3] Mal. iii. 2-4; Job xxiii. 10, compared with xl. 3-5; xlii. 1-6.
[4] 1 Cor. xi. 19. [5] Rev. iii. 12.

root of *grace*—Christ Jesus. And thus he falls "among the number" of them "that commend themselves;" who, "measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are *not wise*."[1] Now "*the wise*" (as we have read) "shall inherit glory; but *shame* shall be the promotion of *fools*."[2] For "*the King's favour* is toward a *wise* servant"—the *Son* is a *servant* so far as his *gifts* are concerned—"but his wrath is against him that causeth *shame:*"[3] and "some," we are told, "shall awake" "to *shame* and *everlasting contempt*."[4]

With *the son*, however, Satan deals chiefly as he did with the Divine Son Himself; especially while he is but a "babe in Christ."[5] He *denies* His son-ship; and he would have *him* to question it also. "'*If* thou *be* the Son of God,' a very likely thing indeed, that God would leave *His* Son in such straights as these!" And thus he deals with the sons now. "*You*, a son of God! Yes, you look *like* a son, don't you? Look at your heart, look at your motives, look at your actions. The Law says so and so; and you never kept it; you broke it there, and you broke it there, and you broke it there; and you sinned in this, and you sinned in that, and you sinned in the other thing. Where are your evidences? Grope in your heart for them; yes, and you may grope for ever; for you'll never find them. And I'll tell you why; because it is manifest that you are only *a servant* after all, and *not a son*, and that's the reason; and your end will be according to your works." And his object in so doing is, of course, to drive him away from Christ, and to keep him from looking up to Him for everything.

It was some such sifting as this that made Paul start when he said, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway,"[6] or one of the ἀδόκιμοί, or unapproved—one of the "tinkling cymbals," he speaks of, that were to be thrown aside after the tune

[1] 2 Cor. x. 12. [2] Prov. iii. 35. [3] Prov. xiv. 35.
[4] Dan. xii. 2. [5] 1 Cor. iii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 2. [6] 1 Cor. ix. 27.

had been played out upon them. It was not that he had any doubt of the security of the everlasting Covenant of grace (quite the contrary), or indeed that he himself was not interested in it; but he knew that *gifts* only made *a servant*, and that if he had nothing more to shew than *these;* and his flesh had not been subdued to the spirit, he would have been *but a servant*, and *not a son at all.* Nay, even, if you take the opposite view, and maintain that Paul at that time thought that he *might* become a castaway, it could only have been on the ground that he doubted whether he were a servant or a son; which is a highly improbable supposition. And, even if he *had*, this would not in the least degree have affected the security of the Covenant itself. There can be no doubt whatever that many a son but too often gives way to unbelieving thoughts of God, his Father; but this does not in the least degree affect or alter the faithfulness of the Lord Himself: and the time will surely come when *every* son will have to acknowledge with the deepest love and gratitude, that "not *one* good thing hath failed of *all* which the Lord hath spoken"[1] concerning Him. David was once so hard pressed by Saul that, in a despairing mood, he said, "I shall now one day *perish* by the hand of Saul."[2] But *did* he perish by the hand of Saul? We know that he did not. But *why* did he not? Because God had promised to give him the kingdom.[3] And the time at length came when "David *perceived* that the Lord had *established him King* over Israel."[4] Yes, but he *might* have perceived it before, if his faith had been stronger: and had he not given way to unbelieving fears he never *would* have doubted it: for *then* he would have reasoned just the contrary, "I shall *never* perish by the hand of Saul *because* God has *promised to give me the kingdom.*"[5]

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[1] Josh. xxi. 45; xxiii. 14.

[2] 1 Sam. xxvii. 1.

[3] 1 Sam. xvi. 1, 12.

[4] 2 Sam. v. 12.

[5] There can be no doubt also that the passage in 1 Cor. ix. 27 likewise refers to ministerial responsibility. See and compare Chap. iii., 11-15; Rev. iii. 11, &c.

But alas! most of the "heirs of promise" now act in the same foolish manner as David did: for many of them are often so hard pressed by the adversary that they sometimes think they shall never reach the kingdom after all. O Yes, they shall; aye, and it may be, have an "*abundant entrance*" into it likewise. But why? *Because* "THE SON ABIDETH IN THE HOUSE FOR EVER"; and God has sworn with an oath to them that "*they* shall *never perish*, neither shall any one pluck them out of His hand."[1] And will not this comfort you, poor trembling believer? It will if the blessed Spirit carry it home with power to your heart.

Now these trials of the son are, (as I have before observed), for a two-fold purpose, first for his own good, and secondly, for the good of others. *We* don't know what the son needs; and he himself doesn't know either: but *the Lord* does. And the Lord will *give* him what he needs, however painful it may seem to him at the time. He is wise and loving, and knoweth how to deal with His own. He "*scourgeth every* son whom He receiveth;" and that "for his *profit*, that he might be a partaker of his holiness."[2] Oh! what a glorious end! And would you not suffer much for *this*? If you have the Spirit of the Son in you you will.

But these trials are often intended for the good of *others* also. If the Lord design to make use of you for the spiritual good of others, you will have to endure greater trials than others. It was so with our Blessed Head in glory, Jesus. For "though He were *a Son*, yet learned He obedience by the things which He *suffered*."[3] Nay, He, as "the Captain of our salvation," was made "perfect through sufferings:"[4] "for in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted."[5] And thus is it with the son, whom the Lord would thus honor: for it is an honor thus to suffer for the Lord's sake and for the good of the brethren. "Unto you it is *given* in the behalf

[1] John x. 28. [2] Heb. xii. 6, 10. [3] Heb. v. 8.
[4] Heb. ii. 10. [5] Heb. ii. 18.

of Christ, not only to *believe* on Him, but *also* to *suffer* for His sake."[1] So Jesus spake of Paul, just after He had called him by His grace before Damascus, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My Name's sake."[2] And so Paul said of himself, and of his fellow laborers, to the Corinthians, in a passage which I have before quoted, "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for *your* consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted it is for *your* consolation and salvation."[3]

I grant you that, while the son is undergoing the trial, it is not "joyous, but grievous" to him, as the Apostle there admits: "Nevertheless afterward," he says (oh, that blessed "afterward"!) "it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them who are exercised thereby."[4] "Temptations," said Bunyan, "are like the lion that roared upon Samson: but if you overcome them, the next time you come to them you'll find a nest of honey in them!" Now, if the Lord had said to such an one, while he was *undergoing* these deep spiritual trials, "You are undergoing these severe trials, because in years to come I shall want you to comfort and edify a great many precious souls, most of them now in nature's darkness, some of them now but babes, and several of them even yet unborn"—what do you think he would have said? Would he not have said, "Ah! but Lord, I want comfort *myself*. Comfort *my* poor soul, comfort *me*, Lord." Yes, but "*afterward*"—after his own establishment in grace, and when the time had come for *him* to comfort *others*, do you think that he would have regretted his soul-troubles *then?* Oh no! He would then see and acknowledge with thankfulness that the Lord's way was the right way: for thus was he being "conformed" to his Head in glory. And do you think that the Lord

[1] Phil. i. 29. [2] Acts ix. 16. [3] 2 Cor. i. 5, 6. [4] Heb. xii. 11.

Jesus, now that He is in heaven, regrets the awful and unparalleled sufferings, which *He* endured for His people, while He was here on earth? Oh no! Why He rejoiced in the prospect of them even *then!* "*I delight* to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart."[1] And "for the joy that was" then "set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame."[2] What then must He think of them *now?* Surely, it must be a source of the most intense joy and satisfaction to Him to be able, in consequence of these very sufferings, to administer joy and peace, and comfort and consolation to those poor sinners now on earth, for whom He thus suffered! Oh, may the blessed Lord give us "to know" more "of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we" also "may be filled with all the fulness of God."[3]

And now a few words only in conclusion, by way of application of the subject. We see then that there are only three classes of persons in the world—natural men, without conviction—natural men, with added convictions and illuminations,—and spiritual men:—servants—servants in the house—and sons. To which of these three classes do you belong?

Reader, are you a *natural* man? Oh that God would then send *His* word, like a clap of thunder, rattling through your conscience: for then it might be that He would cause you to hear some such words as these—"What *meanest* thou, O Sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon" thee, "that" thou "*perish not.*"[4] "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from out of the dead" (*i.e.* around thee), "and Christ shall give thee light."[5]

Or, are you a natural man *under convictions*, and, it may be, *with added illumination* likewise? Then I would say to you, with holy Rutherford, "Oh! fear your light; for it is from God. To go on in a course of sin against an en-

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[1] Psa. xl. 8; Heb. x. 5-10. [2] Heb. xii. 2. [3] Eph. iii 19.
[4] Jonah i. 6. [5] Eph. v. 14.

lightened conscience is a step to the sin against the Holy Ghost." What! wilt thou roll thy sin as a sweet morsel under thy tongue? Dost thou not know that there is a deadly poison in it to thy soul? That object which seems so fair and pleasing to thy carnal heart, is decked out by Satan to lure thee on to perdition. The devil's "wine" looks "red" and sparkling "in the cup;" but "at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."[1] All the glitter and tinsel of this vain and empty world, which looks to thee so bright and pleasant, is held up to thee by the Evil One, in order that thou mightest follow after it to thine eternal undoing. Nay, that worldly religion, which seems so enchanting to thee, because it permits thee to hope for salvation, while thou art yet in thy sins, is presented to thee by the devil himself, as "an angel of light," to keep thee *quiet* in thy sins, and to prevent thee from coming as an utterly lost sinner to Jesus *to be saved from sin.* Have you never read in God's Word, that "Satan himself is" sometimes "transformed into an angel of light;"[2] and that there is, therefore, through his subtlety, a danger of a man's receiving "*another* Jesus," which is *not* the *true* Jesus; of his being partaker of "*another* spirit," which is *not* the *Holy* Spirit; and of his believing in "*another* Gospel," which is *not* "the Gospel of the *grace* of God"?[3] If you haven't, look at the 11th Chapter of St. Paul's 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians. *Another* Jesus will let you lie still in your sins: but the *true* Jesus will not. *Another* spirit can live at peace with the spirit of the world: but the *Holy* Spirit cannot. *Another* Gospel will ally itself with the enemies of the cross of Christ: but *Christ's* Holy Gospel, the Gospel of the *grace* of God, will never for a moment condescend to any such unholy alliances and compromises. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit

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[1] Prov. xxiii. 31, 32. [2] 2 Cor. xi. 14. [3] See also Gal. i. 6-9; iii. 1-3.

shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."[1] Oh, throw down the weapons of your rebellion; and cast yourself at the feet of Jesus. Look up unto Him, whom you have pierced with your sins, run out in your heart to Him, believe in Him, and be saved.

And to you, O beloved, who have believed in Jesus to the saving of your souls, I would ask you what are you now *doing* to "*shew forth* the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light"?[2] You know now that you are not your own; but that "you are bought with a price," even with the "precious blood" of Jesus: "therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."[3] Therefore "as He which hath called you is holy, so be *ye* holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."[4] "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may *prove* what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect *will of God.*"[5] And may the Lord, the Spirit, carry home His words with power to our hearts, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

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[1] Gal. vi. 7, 8. [2] 1 Pet. ii. 9. [3] 1 Cor. vi. 20.
[4] 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. [5] Rom. xii. 1, 2.

PART III.

THE MOON AND THE STARS.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MOON.

"Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray
Had in her sober livery all things clad;
Silence accompanied: for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;
She all night long her amorous descant sung;
Silence was pleas'd: now glow'd the firmament
With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest, till the Moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent queen unveil'd her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw."

"In the depths of His bright glory,
Where the heavens rejoice,
I have seen Him, I have known Him,
I have heard His voice.

"He has told me how He sought me
In the cloudy day,
On the waste and lonely mountains
Very far away.

"Words unutterable He speaketh—
Words that none can tell,—
Yet, O Lord, Thy wondrous secret
Knows my heart full well.

. . . . . .

"Is it sweet to know He careth
For my smallest need—
Know that He will ever tend me,
Watch, and guard, and feed?

"Yet unutterably sweeter,
Wondrous though it be,
His desire is toward me—
He had need of me."

"When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the Son of Man that Thou visitest him?"—PSA. viii. 3, 4.

"Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in His sight. How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man which is a worm?"—JOB xxv. 5, 6.

"Blessed of Jehovah be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon."—DEUT. xxxiii. 13, 14.

"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?"—CANT. vi. 10.

AND now leaving the earth, we will glance upwards into the heavens, and contemplate for a short period our earth's companion, and enlightener, the Moon; the emblematical signification of which is by no means obscurely expressed in Scripture. We shall see, as we proceed, that the Moon represents the Church of Christ, in its *corporate*, or collective capacity; as the enlightener of the earth, in the *absence of*, and as *a witness for*, the Sun. For as *the Earth*, and her changes, chiefly represent the *inward* aspect of the saved sinner's heart, and the work of God upon it: so *the Moon*, and her changes, chiefly represent its *outward* aspect, so to speak, with respect to the world at large. "Who is *she* that looketh forth as the morning, *fair as the Moon*, clear as the Sun, and terrible as an army with banners,"[1] or, as some render it, "as *the heavenly host?*" Hence she is called "*a faithful witness in heaven.*"[2] For when Christ Himself left this earth, He left the Church to bear witness for Him, in a "world which lieth in the wicked one."[3] And so we read, that when He was about to leave His disciples, He "opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations,

[1] Cant. vi. 10. [2] Psa. lxxxix. 37. [3] 1 John v. 19.

beginning at Jerusalem. And *ye are witnesses of these things.* And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. And He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven."[1]

Hence the calling of the Church of Christ is a *heavenly* calling: for it is a call from One in heaven to one on earth, for that one on earth to come up into heaven![2] just as real, though not in the same sense, as when John "looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the *first voice* which I heard," said he, "was, *Come up hither!*"[3] Hence it is heavenly in its *origin:* for it proceeds from the God of heaven. It is heavenly in its *nature* and *character.* "Wherefore, holy brethren," says the Apostle, "partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."[4] And it is heavenly in its *end* and *issue:* for it will at length bring the partaker of it to heaven itself. "Let not your heart," therefore, said Jesus, "be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions:"—*μονὰι*, abiding-places, in contradistinction to our present tent-life[5]—"if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."[6]

And how aptly does the Moon thus represent the Church of Christ! Look down deep into her nature; and what do you see in her? There is not the slightest indication of the existence of water within her whole territory; nor of any atmosphere surrounding her. Her surface is rugged and barren; and she looks utterly desolate and deserted. She

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[1] Luke xxiv. 45-51. [2] Acts ix. 3-6; xxii. 6-10; xxvi. 13-18.
[3] Rev. iv. 1. [4] Heb. iii. 1.
[5] Heb. xi. 9, 10; 1 Pet. ii. 11; 2 Pet. i. 13-15. [6] John xiv. 1-3.

is full of pits and caverns, rocks and volcanoes. There are a vast number of extinct volcanoes, several miles in breadth; and a line of them in continuance about 150 miles in length, running in a straight direction like a railway. Her general appearance is *like one vast ruin of nature;* and many of the pieces of rock, driven out of the volcanoes, are spread forth in all directions. *She literally looks like a fallen world*—a world of barrenness, desolation and of death! Truly how apt an illustration, as we have seen, of the sinner saved by the Sovereign grace of God! "For ye were sometimes," *i.e.*, some time ago, "darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord,"[1] *i.e.* enlightened by the Lord. For these things could never have been revealed to us, had it not been for the light of the sun shining in upon her emptiness and her ruin. "Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me."[2]

Ah! but it is *then* only that she shines! And her appearance as seen through a telescope is now magnificent in the extreme: for she looks like a globe of burnished silver! And being herself enlightened by the Sun, she is thus enabled to reflect some of His light-giving rays upon a poor dark world. "For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."[3] For speaking to "the Church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ," the Apostle says, "ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."[4] "Walk," therefore, says he to another Church, "as children of light."[5] For then only is it, that it can be said of the Church, what the Scriptures say of "the Moon" herself, that she is "walking in brightness."[6] And yet even then she is not perfect: for there are still some spots and dark places in her. Hence the Moon represents

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[1] Eph. v. 8. [2] Cant. i. 6. [3] 2 Cor. iv. 6.
[4] 1 Thes. i. 1; v. 5. [5] Eph. v. 8. [6] Job xxxi. 26.

the Church, which *is now on earth*, although she is exalted even *into "the heavenlies in Christ*[1]—not the Church as it *will be*, when Christ comes again, when He will "present it to Himself a glorious *Church, not having spot* or wrinkle, or any such thing."[2] And so there is still need of the exhortation of the Lord, "*Ye are the light of the world*"—"*Let your light so shine before men*, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Which is in heaven."[3] For as the Lord has set the Moon in an orbit, that goes completely round the earth: so has He directed the Church, to "go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."[4] And as the Moon, in thus fulfilling its destined orbit, is at the same time also circulating round the Sun: so is the Church of Christ, while thus ministering to the world, at the same time fulfilling all the will of God. Hence we read, that as "He *appointed* the Moon for seasons:"[5] so our Lord tells His disciples, "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have *chosen* you, and *ordained* you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain."[6] For although the Moon can only communicate some of the *light-giving* rays of the Sun to the earth, and none of its *heat-giving* rays:[7] yet we read of the "precious things put forth by the Moon,"[8] notwithstanding.

Mr. Roberts informs us, in his "Oriental Illustrations," that the Hindoos attribute to the moon a very strong influence on vegetation. They think that, from the time of the new moon to its becoming full, all plants and all kinds of grain gain more strength than at any other period. But whether this be so or not; we know that there are some "precious things" connected with the *symbolical* Moon. Peter speaks of no less than five "precious things," that

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[1] Eph. i. 2-6. [2] Eph. v. 27. [3] Mat. v. 14, 16; Mark xvi. 15.
[4] Mark xvi. 15. [5] Psa. civ. 19. [6] John xv. 16.

[7] I speak here of course of *appreciable* heat-giving rays; for as *heat* is reflected as well as *light*, the moon reflects *some* heat, though insignificant; yet it is to be detected by suitable instruments: for it has been *measured!*

[8] Deut. xxxiii. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 7; Mal. iv. 2; John viii. 12.

are connected with it. There is first a precious Christ, the "Sun of Righteousness," which gives it its light.[1] There is His "precious blood," which redeemed it.[2] There are "precious promises" made to it, to enable it to trust in Him, and that it might be made a "partaker of a Divine nature."[3] There is "precious faith,"[4] which He enables it to "*put forth*," "to lay hold upon the hope set before" it in the Gospel.[5] And there is the "precious trial"[6] of that faith, that it may be proved to be a Divinely-wrought faith—"the faith of God's elect."[7]

That the Moon can, however, only communicate appreciable *light*-giving rays, and not *heat*-giving rays, we see plainly exemplified in the case of Saul of Tarsus, who, when a "young man," looked upon *the light* shining upon *Stephen*, as he stood before "the Council" in Jerusalem, and "saw his face as it had been the face of an angel:" but this glorious sight communicated no *heat*[8] to his cold heart: for "he consented unto his death," "and kept the raiment of them that slew him."[9] Ah! but it was very different when *he* looked upon "the *Sun* of Righteousness" —when he looked upon the face of *Jesus himself*, as it was revealed unto him from heaven: for *then* his proud heart was broken, and his rebellious will was surrendered unto the Lord; as he cried out, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"[10]

But light is not the only benefit that the Moon confers upon the earth. She has a wonderful influence over it also by raising the tides of the ocean. The tides are of incalculable benefit to man: so that, in a sanitary point of view, as one says, "the moon may be regarded as the great scavenger of our globe:" for twice every day she

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[1] 1 Pet. ii. 7; Mal. iv. 2; John viii. 12.
[2] 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. [3] 2 Pet. i. 4. [4] 2 Pet. i. 1.
[5] Heb. vi. 18. [6] 1 Pet. i. 7. [7] Titus i. 1.
[8] In my first vol. of "The Hidden Mystery," I shew that *heat* is an emblem of *love*.
[9] Acts vi. 15; vii. 57-60; viii. 1. [10] Acts ix. 3-6.

flushes, with sea water in abundance, the rivers on which so many of our towns are situated, and keeps them in a state of comparative purity. And in this respect she is an apt illustration of the moral influence which the Church exercises over the world: and it is not too much to say that but for her existence in the earth the world would have remained, not only in heathen darkness, but would have sunk down even deeper than it has done, into the basest and most abject degradation. Men little know how much they owe to that which they so much despise. Indeed the benefits which the world derives from the presence of the Church of Christ in its midst are incalculable. Nay, even the outward profession of Christianity by a nation will instantly raise it in the scale of nations: for the Scriptures tell us that "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."[1] And how many are outwardly blessed even by the very presence among them of the righteous themselves: for we read again that "Jehovah blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake:"[2] while even the grasping "Laban" had to acknowledge to "Jacob," "I have learned by experience that Jehovah hath blessed me for thy sake."[3]

Indeed the Lord has given us illustrations without number of these truths, in the history of the world, if we had but eyes to see them. Who can look at the history of Holland, for example, which, after superhuman struggles, and frightful sufferings, threw off the accursed yoke of Rome, and stood forth boldly for the truth of God; and not see the hand of God, in raising her at once into so commanding a position, that she was the astonishment of Europe. For then she became a land of warriors, of statesmen and of scholars; and founded a commerce which extended over a large portion of the globe: while she exerted a political influence, which was felt, and recognized in every cabinet in Europe. And has it not been the same with our own

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[1] Prov. xiv. 34. [2] Gen. xxxix. 5. [3] Gen. xxx. 27.

favored island; and for the same reason? But Holland left her first love, and has decayed in consequence, and has rapidly gone down in the scale of nations. And is not England, alas! following her example; and will not *she* also have to suffer?[1]

But the Moon also has her *phases*. It is not always *full-moon:* Nay, there is a time when she gives *no* light. And is not this true also of the Church of Christ? When "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the Apostles *witness* of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."[2] "And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women."[3] —I think it must have been *full-moon then*. But "when the number of the disciples was multiplied," and "there arose a murmuring of the Grecians," or Hellenist Jews, "against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration"—I think it must then have been *beginning to wane*.[4]

And have there not been *phases* in the history of the Church of Christ ever since? Nevertheless, even when the Moon seems to give no light to the *earth*, she herself is still enlightened by the sun: for an *inner* side, which the world

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[1] See my "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," Vol. I., Chap. VIII., Sec. 1, pp. 357-360: where this subject is more fully gone into.

[2] Acts iv. 32-35. [3] Acts v. 13-14.

[4] See my "Outlines of Prophetic Truth," Vol. II., Chap. I., Sec. 2, pp. 17-22; Chap. V., Sec. 3, pp. 229-248: where this subject is fully gone into.

sees not, is always turned towards Him. So even in the darkest periods of the Church's history, God is with her, and "the Sun of Righteousness" is her "light" and her "salvation,"[1] and illumines her still. "God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed Thy prophets, and digged down Thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace."[2] Aye: and so will there be all down the ages, even until He come again.

And it is a singular fact, connected with this subject, that the Moon turns constantly the same side to us, for the simple reason, that she rotates once upon her axis, in the same time that she performs a revolution round the earth: but, I believe, it is only within the last 40 years or so, that formerly unaccountable irregularities in her motion, have now been thoroughly explained, and the knotty question regarding them finally set at rest. The credit of this discovery is due to M. Hansen, although Mr. Airy, the Astronomer-Royal, no doubt furnished him with the details to enable him to work it out. He has fully vindicated the law of gravitation, and has triumphantly shewn that the cause of the irregularity in the Moon's orbit, arose from the fact, that the Moon's centre of gravity, and her geographical centre, are not coincident, the one being distant from the other by about 37 miles—in other words, that the half of the moon, which is visible to us is lighter than the other half, which is invisible—the result of which would be, that *if* the sphere of the moon had been covered with water, and enveloped in an atmosphere, both the water and air would of course flow to the heavier side, and leave the lighter side

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[1] Psa. xxvii. 1. [2] Rom. xi. 2-5.

destitute of both, as we now see it: so that, in such a case, the other side of the Moon, which we never see, *might* be covered with vegetation, as is our earth itself. Now *if* this be so, the Moon would also, as we have seen that our earth does, perfectly represent the two natures of a believer, the old and the new—*this* side of the Moon representing our "old man," lost and fallen; and the *other* representing our "new man," as "created" anew "in Christ Jesus,"[1] "in righteousness and holiness of truth."[2]

But whether this be so or not, the Moon, when unenlightened, certainly represents that outwardly professing Church that is destitute of the grace of God; which is invariably a persecuting Church, as the pages of history and the sad experience of the saints of God but too plainly prove. And then it is that she produces *lunatics* who, instigated by the evil one, "make havoc of the" true "Church" of Christ, often "entering into every house, and haling men and women, commit them to prison,"[3] aye, and often unto death. It has often been questioned whether the moon has any effect upon lunatics so-called: but those who have had the charge of such persons believe that it has; and the Scriptures speak of one who was a lunatic, who was possessed with a demon, whom Jesus cast out of him, when he was healed at once.[4] But that such *symbolical* lunatics are really *moon-struck*, and possessed of the devil, is manifest from the statement of an inspired Apostle himself, who was one of them. For he says, I "profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." And yet he says of himself, "beyond measure I *persecuted* the Church of God, and wasted it:"[5] for "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up

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[1] Eph. ii. 10. [2] Eph. iv. 24. [3] Acts viii. 3.
[4] Mat. xvii. 14-21. See also iv. 24. [5] Gal. i. 13-14.

in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being *exceedingly mad* against them,"—ἐμμαινόμενος[1]—"I persecuted them even unto strange cities."[2]

But the Moon is also subject to *eclipses.* An eclipse takes place whenever the earth comes between the sun and the moon, and shuts out its light from her: for she has no light in herself, she only shines when the sun itself shines upon her. And is it not so with the Church of Christ? aye, with individual believers in Christ also; as but too many of us have found out to our cost. But there is equally an eclipse when the moon herself comes between the sun and the earth. Yes: if you put anything between your soul and Christ, even the Church of Christ herself, in the place of Christ, His light will be withdrawn from you, and there will be an eclipse in your soul. "Abide in Me and I in you," says He. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for apart from Me ye can do nothing." "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples."[3]

And to such He has made this blessed promise, "Jehovah is thy keeper: Jehovah is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. Jehovah shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul."[4] This promise has both a *literal* and a *figurative* interpretation: but after what I have already said, I need hardly apply it, as it will be self-evident: for He "made

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[1] Μαίνομαι, to be mad, to rave—intrans., spoken of persons who so speak and act as to seem to others to be out of their senses. John x. 20; Acts xii. 15; 1 Cor. xiv. 23.

[2] Acts xxvi. 9-11. [3] John xv. 4, 5, 7, 8. [4] Psa. cxxi. 5-7.

great lights"—"the sun to rule by day," and "the moon and stars to rule by night."[1]

But as the Moon will not always remain in its present state, neither will the Church herself. For it is predicted of the Moon, "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that Jehovah bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound."[2] And in that day it is also predicted of the Church, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."[3] "So let all Thine enemies perish, O Jehovah: but let them that love Him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might."[4] For "Behold," says the Apostle, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall be manifested, *we shall be like Him;* for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."[5] "Jehovah will hasten it in His time."[6]

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[1] Psa. cxxxvi. 7, 8. The *literal* application of the passage is of course to a sun and moon stroke. A *sun-stroke* is of course well known; but a *moon-stroke* is not so well known, at least in these latitudes. Take the following as an example of it. In a number of the *Brisbane Courier*, in the year 1865, occurs the following:—"Mr. Perry, who was reported to be lost in the Bush near Peak Downs, has arrived in Clermont, having been for five and a half days without food. The cause of losing his way was his being *blinded by sleeping under the rays of the moon.* He wandered about in a state of blindness for several days, until sight was partially restored, when he was enabled to find the track to Griffiths Station."

[2] Isa. xxx. 26. [3] Matt. xiii. 43. [4] Jud. v. 31.

[5] 1 John iii. 1-3. [6] Isa. lx. 22.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE STARS.

"When I survey the bright
Celestial sphere:
So rich with jewels hung, that night
Doth like an Ethiop bride appear;

"My soul her wings doth spread,
And heaven-ward flies,
The Almighty's mysteries to read
In the large volume of the skies.

"For the bright firmament
Shoots forth no flame
So silent, but is eloquent
In speaking the Creator's name.

"No unregarded star
Contracts its light
Into so small a character,
Removed far from our human sight,

"But if we steadfast look,
We shall discern
In it as in some holy book,
How man may heavenly knowledge learn."

"Shine together! sons of light,
If ye'd pierce the gloom of night
With a radiance clear and bright,

"From those clustered hosts apart—
What were *one star* in the dark,
With its tiny silver spark?

"'Tis the *grouping*, side by side,
Light's fair union, far and wide,
Star with shining star allied,—

"'Tis the silent, sweet consent
Of the rays together blent,
In the glorious firmament,—

"That makes night so full of song,
And with light serene and strong
Cheers the traveller along."

"The works of Jehovah are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein."—PSA. cxi. 4.

"Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are!"—JOB xxii. 12.

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."—DAN. xii. 3.

"There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory."—1 COR. xv. 41.

WE now leave the Earth and its Satellite, the Moon, and passing through our planetary system, soar upwards towards the Stars. And these, we shall see, are set forth in Scripture as emblems of the children of the living God. This emblem was originally applied to the angels of heaven: who, when God "laid the foundations of the earth," are represented as "morning stars" singing together, and as "the sons of God" shouting "for joy."[1] And it is now also applied to the saints of God: because they have become "sons of God," by believing in Jesus;[2] and shall be "equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."[3] Hence Jesus Himself, before He came down to this earth to "tabernacle"[4] among us, was announced as "a Star," that should come "out of Jacob, and a Sceptre" that should "rise out of Israel;"[5] and He Himself alludes to this prophecy, when He says, "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."[6] For a Star is, as we know, a Sun, seen at an immense distance from us. But when He comes again, He will "arise" upon them "that fear" His "name" as "the Sun of Righteousness," "with healing in His wings."[7] And we have seen likewise, that "when He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."[8]

As the Sun, therefore, represents Christ Himself, and the Moon, the Church of Christ, in her corporate capacity: so

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[1] Job xxxviii. 4, 7. [2] John i. 12, 13. [3] Luke xx. 36. [4] John i. 14.
[5] Num. xxiv. 17. [6] Rev. xxii. 17. [7] Mal. iv. 2. [8] 1 John iii. 2.

the Stars represent believers in Christ, as considered singly and alone. Hence when God "called" Abraham "alone, and blessed him,"[1] and "he believed in Jehovah; and He counted it to him for righteousness;"[2] "He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell *the stars*, if thou be able to number them; and He said unto him, So shall *thy seed* be."[3] Now these stars represented the *spiritual* seed, or *believing* children, of Abraham, both of Jew as well as Gentile; and this promise was made to Abraham before he was circumcised, in order that this might be made apparent: for the Apostle says, that "faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness," when he was "in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised; that he might be *the father of all them that believe*, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed to them also: and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had, being yet uncircumcised. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."[4] "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And *if ye be Christ's*, then are ye *Abraham's seed*, and heirs according to the promise."[5]

For the promises to Abraham were two-fold—the one respecting his *literal*, and the other respecting his *spiritual* seed—the *spiritual* seed being compared to "*the stars of heaven*," and the *literal* to "*the dust of the earth*," and to "*the sand*, which is upon the sea shore."[6] Isaac, born

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[1] Isa. li. 2. [2] Gen. xv. 6. [3] Gen. xv. 5. [4] Rom. iv. 9-13.
[5] Gal. iii. 26-29. [6] Gen. xiii. 15, 16; xv. 5; xxii. 16-18; Heb. xi. 11, 12.

contrary to nature, was a type of "the children of promise," or of the *believing* children of Abraham, as the Apostle asserts, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now."[1] Hence in renewing the covenant and promise to Isaac, God made reference to the seed, which was to be as "*the stars of heaven*" only; although the literal seed are of course included also, as the passage shews[2]—for the time *will* come when that "people shall be *all* righteous:"[3] "for they shall *all* know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."[4] *Jacob*, who on believing became *Israel*, represents "the old man" and "the new man" in antagonism.[5] He also stands for the *earthly* seed: who are interchangeably called either "*Jacob*" or "*Israel*," as they assume these characteristics before God; or, as God views them, either in the Covenant, or, as outwardly violating it. Hence in renewing the promise to Jacob, God referred to *his* seed as "*the dust of the earth*" only:[6] while to Abraham the father of the one, and the grandfather of the other, He spake of "the dust of the earth," where the literal seed only were referred to;[7] and of "the stars of the heaven," and "the sand which is upon the sea shore," where both were referred to[8]—"*the dust* of the earth" having reference to their *origin*,[9] and "*the sand* which is on the sea shore," to their *numbers*.[10]

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[1] Gal. iv. 28, 29.
[2] Gen. xxvi. 3-5; Gal. iv. 28.
[3] Isa. lx. 21.
[4] Jer. xxxi. 34.
[5] Rom. vii. 18-23; viii. 7, 8; 2 Cor. v. 17; Eph. iv. 22-24; Col. iii. 9-11; 2 Tim. i. 14; Gal. v. 17.
[6] Gen. xxviii. 3, 4, 13, 14.
[7] Gen. xiii. 14-17.
[8] Gen. xxii. 15-18.
[9] Gen. iii. 19; Psa. ciii. 14.
[10] Isa. x. 22; Rom. ix. 27; Heb. xi. 12. The passages in Deut. i. 10; x. 22; xxviii. 62, and Nehemiah ix. 23, do not militate against this view, as could easily be shewn. See and compare Deut. ix. 1 with Jer. xxxiii. 22; Isa. lxvi. 8; Jer. xxxi. 31-34, &c.

And their *numbers* will be the first point which I shall have to notice: for this is the point which God himself referred to when He first mentioned the subject to Abraham. And the Holy Ghost alludes to this as a living proof of the *infinitude* of the God-head. "He telleth *the number* of the stars; He calleth them *all* by their names. Great is our Lord, and of great power, His understanding is *infinite.*"[1] And this indeed affords the most awfully convincing proof of it: for when we consider the infinite number of the stars themselves; and that all these stars are suns, around which probably other worlds are circulating; and that all these have been sustained and kept in their proper orbits for ages; the mind shrinks from the contemplation of the infinitude of intelligence and power that would be needed to produce so glorious a result! The stars that can be seen by the naked eye vary in number of course according to the sight of the observer. Argelander, the Director of the Observatory of Bonn, has published an exact catalogue of the stars visible on the horizon of Berlin during the course of the year, which comprises 3,256 stars: but M. Heis, of Munster, affirms that his sight is so penetrating that he can perceive with the naked eye 2,000 more stars than those catalogued by Argelander. Humboldt reckoned 4,146 stars visible on the horizon of Paris in the course of the year; and as the number increases in proportion as we approach the equator, 4,638 are said to be visible to the naked eye during the year at Alexandria: so that the maximum number may be said to be comprised between 5,000 and 6,000 for the entire heavens.

But when we look at the heavens through one of the largest of the telescopes, the numbers of the stars that then become visible is enormously increased. Argelander reckons the stars of the seventh magnitude to comprise nearly 13,000; those of the eighth, 40,000; those of the ninth, 142,000: while Struve estimates the total number

[1] Psa. cxlvii. 4, 5.

of stars visible in the entire heavens by the aid of Sir William Herschell's 20-feet reflector, as more than 20,000,000; although these approximate numbers are undoubtedly much below the real ones: for the bright zone in the heavens, known by the name of the Milky Way, alone contains, according to Herschell, 18,000,000. M. Chacornac estimates at 77,000,000, the number of stars comprised in the thirteen magnitudes alone; and if we were to add to these all the stars of which the various star-clusters are composed their number would be so vast that no man could number them. And yet *He* "calleth them *all* by their names!"

And when we consider the exceeding great number of the Redeemed, from Abel downwards, throughout all the ages, to the end of the history of the Adamic earth—that at the second coming of the Lord "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," will stand "before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and" crying "with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God Which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb"[1]—and that even afterwards, during the Millennium, "all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto Jehovah; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before" Him;[2] —we can see how marvellously true is the comparison, and what a wonderful comment it affords upon Gen. xv. 5, compared with Psa. cxlvii. 4, 5; and we are filled with holy awe, when we consider that *all these* must have been the subjects of Divine grace; and that God has dealt *with each one of them individually;* and "calls them *all* by their names"! Yes; "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His."[3] "Fear not," says He; "for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine."[4] And although many of them have often foolishly thought, that God had

[1] Rev. vii. 9, 10. [2] Psa. xxii. 27. [3] 2 Tim. ii. 19. [4] Isa. xliii. 1.

forsaken, or forgotten them; yet this could never be: "for He hath said, I will *never* leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."[1]

It is reported of the Rev. John Newton, of St. Mary Woolnoth, that during an attack of fever, "he was for a while troubled, whether by a temptation, or by the fever disordering his faculties, that *he should be lost or overlooked amidst the myriads, that are continually entering the unseen world;* but the recollection of that Scripture, 'The Lord knoweth them that are His,' put an end to his doubts." No: not one of the Lord's loved ones can ever be lost, or forgotten by Him: for He hath said, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee."[2] And Jesus hath said, "This is the will of Him that sent Me, that of *all* which He hath given Me I should lose *nothing*, but should raise it up again at the last day."[3] And at that day, they shall all appear with Him in glory; and He will say to His Father, "Behold I and the children which" Thou hast "given Me."[4] It is impossible, therefore, that any *real* child of God can ever be lost: for "God Who cannot lie," has "promised" him "eternal life";[5] and his "life is hid with Christ in God."[6] For "heaven and earth shall pass away," said Jesus, "but My words shall not pass away."[7] And the reason is, because the life of a believer is "bound in the bundle of life,"[8] with Christ's own life: for He has said, "Because *I* live *ye* shall live also."[9] John tells us, that He saw Jesus with "seven stars" "in His right hand:"[10] but he could not tell us, *how fast* He held them there. It was Jesus Himself, Who tells us this:—"These things saith He that *holdeth*," *i.e.*, *fast*, ὁ κρατῶν (from the derivative, κράτος, *strength*), "the seven stars in His

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[1] Heb. xiii. 5, 6. [2] Isa. xlix. 15. [3] John vi. 39. [4] Heb. ii. 13.
[5] Titus i. 2. [6] Col. iii. 3. [7] Mat. xxiv. 35. [8] 1 Sam. xxv. 29.
[9] John xiv. 19. [10] Rev. i. 16.

right hand."[1] For, says He, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of My hand. My Father, Which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one."[2]

But numberless as are the stars, they are not all placed in the same position in the heavens. Many of them are gathered together in groups; and some even seem to be shining singly and alone; while in one region a vast number of them are congregated together; although from their distance from us, they appear to be smaller and more insignificant than the others. To many, who do not look deep into things, the stars may seem to be scattered about in all directions, without order or arrangement; but it is not so: for they are all placed in the position in which God would have them to be; and, that being the right position, they are necessarily all obeying the will of their Almighty Creator, and keeping to the orbit which He has assigned to them. They do not, indeed, all shine with the same degree of brilliancy: for the light of some is but feeble; while that of others is brilliant in the extreme. Herschell tells us, that while looking through his magnificent telescope, the star Sirius, or, the dog-star, suddenly appeared in the field of view; but its brightness was so intense, that he could not bear to look at it; and he was compelled at once to remove his eyes from the instrument.[3]

And is not this true also of the saints of God, whom these stars represent? Are not they also scattered up and down all over the earth's surface, sometimes singly and alone, and again in groups, and in numbers; while other parts of the earth's surface are destitute of them? And do

[1] Rev. ii. 1. [2] John x. 27-30.

[3] Sirius is the largest and brightest star in the heavens, and is computed to be twelve times larger than our sun; which would make its diameter about 11,000,000 miles!

not they also shine with very varied degrees of light? And yet they are all placed in the very position, in which God would have them to be; and if they are giving forth light to others, however feeble that light may sometimes be, they are "giving God the glory due unto His name;" and fulfilling with others, His special will and command also unto them:—"Praise ye Him, all His angels: praise ye Him, all His hosts. Praise ye Him, Sun and Moon: praise Him, *all ye stars of light.*"[1]

With respect to that galaxy of stars in the heavens, familiarly called "The Milky Way," Archbishop Leighton says, "There is a certain company of small stars in the firmament, which, though they cannot be each one severally seen, yet, being many, their united light makes a conspicuous brightness in the heavens, which is called the Milky Way; so, though the shining of every private Christian is not so much severally remarkable, yet the concourse and meeting of their light together will make a bright path of holiness shine in the Church. Now to the end we may each one shine in our measure, we must learn to turn ourselves often towards Him from Whom our light is derived. Conversing with Him will make us more and more like Him. There is a secret, unknown virtue for this purpose in secret prayer and meditation. Were we more in the mount with God, our faces would shine more with men. Let us then rescue from the world all the time we can to resort frequently thither, till such time as the soul, which is now often pulled down again by the flesh, shall let that mantle fall, and come down no more, but shine there without spot, and be for ever satisfied with her Maker's image."

Now every one of these stars, as every one of the saints of God, has a history: but who can tell it? None but God, Who knows them all; and He sometimes reveals the history of some for the benefit and edification of others. We have a beautiful illustration of this in the Book of Chronicles.

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[1] Psa. cxlviii. 2, 3.

Among a vast number of names scattered up and down, as it were, in the first ten Chapters of the first book of Chronicles, like the stars in the Milky Way, we have a few singled out from the midst who appear more prominent than the rest, as Jabez, of whom it is said, "And Jabez was more honorable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that Thine hand might be with me, and that Thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested."[1] And just as a powerful telescope, searching into the heavens, reveals many more stars than are visible to the naked eye: so does the Spirit of the living God unfold to our view, and reveal to us many precious things in His Word, which had been before completely hidden from our sight.[2] Hence the prayer of the Psalmist, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law."[3] And as an illustration of this truth, connected with these very genealogies, I might mention the case of Hezron, of the tribe of *Judah*, whose name occurs in the Genealogy of our Lord, but some of whose descendants are in 1 Chron. ii. 21-24, and in other passages of Scripture also, reckoned to *Manasseh*—a fact which I have fully gone into and explained, in considering our Lord's Genealogies in my first volume of "Outlines of Prophetic Truth."[4]

The Word tells us that "the stars" were not only "given" "for a *light* by night;"[5] but also to "*rule* by night;"[6] and that "the stars *in their courses fought* against Sisera"[7]—by which I understand that the Israelites were helped against their enemies also by the angelic hosts.[8] And so

[1] 1 Chron. iv. 9, 10.

[2] See my "Hidden Mystery," Vol. I., Chap. II., pp. 16-20, which deals with this subject.

[3] Psa. cxix. 18.

[4] Vol. I., Chap. IX., Sec. 3, pp. 445-467.

[5] Jer. xxxi. 35.

[6] Psa. cxxxvi. 9.

[7] Jud. v. 20.

[8] See and compare Heb. i. 14, with Psa. xci. 11, 12; 2 Kings vi. 15-18; Isa. xxxvii. 35, 36.

the saints of God are directed, not only to let their "light *shine* before men, that they" might "see" their "good works, and glorify" their "Father which is in heaven;"[1] but also to "*work*" and to "*fight;*" albeit in a spiritual and not in a worldly sense. For "the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ" "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all lawlessness, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, *zealous of good works.*"[2] And the Apostle tells us that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, *thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*"[3] And although the final safety of every real believer in Christ is secured, this does not exempt him from being "careful to maintain good works;"[4] but, on the contrary, will only urge him with greater diligence to perform them. And the following observations of Bishop Hopkins are so pertinent on this subject that I am tempted to transcribe them.

He says:—"Consider, is it not to this end that God hath implanted such an active principle of grace in the hearts of His servants, that thereby they might be enabled to work out their own salvation? If God would save you without working, why then hath He given you such an operative principle that you might work? Nay, I might affirm it, He might as well save you without grace as without works; for that is not grace that doth not put forth itself in working. Grace, if it be true, it will be working, it will rise in the thoughts, it will work in the affections, it will break in desires, appear in good works, and be very active and busy in the whole life and conversation. Now, not to work, is that which puts a check and restraint upon this active principle; it is to curb it in, when it would freely break forth into action upon every occasion given to it. Why hath God so often promised us assistance, if it be not that thereby we should be encouraged to work? He stands by

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[1] Mat. v. 16. [2] Titus ii. 13, 14. [3] 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. [4] Titus iii. 8.

us to confirm our hearts, to strengthen our hands, to help our weakness, to quicken our deadness, to recruit our graces by continual supplies; and wherefore is all this but that we might work? God, rather than we shall not work, He Himself will set us at work; nay, He will maintain us at our work, and in our work, upon His own cost."

The Bishop does not of course mean, as some might infer from his words, that believers are to work *for* life, or justification, but *from* life; as the Apostle himself expresses it, When he says, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always *obeyed*, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, *work out your own salvation* with fear and trembling: for it is *God* which *worketh in you* both to *will* and to *do of His good pleasure*."[1] For faith is both a *passive*, as well as an *active* grace. "*By* faith" we *receive* the salvation which Christ Jesus Himself has wrought out for us, and are "justified" thereby, and "have peace with God."[2] "*Through* faith" the saints have "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, *waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens*."[3] Wherefore it is written, "*Fight* the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."[4] "Finally, my brethren, *be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might*. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in the heavenlies. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of

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[1] Phil. ii. 12, 13. [2] Rom. v. 1. [3] Heb. xi. 33, 34. [4] 1 Tim. vi. 12.

righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication of the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."[1]

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully."[2] "The post of honour in wars," says the Rev. John Newton, in one of his instructive letters, "is so called because attended with difficulties and dangers which but few are supposed equal to; yet generals usually allot these hard services to their favourites and friends, who on their parts eagerly accept them as tokens of favour and marks of confidence. Should we, therefore, not account it an honour and a privilege, when the Captain of our Salvation assigns us a difficult post? since He can and does (which no earthly commander can) inspire His soldiers with wisdom, courage and strength, suitable to their situation, 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. I am acquainted with a few who have been led thus into the forefront of the battle: they suffered much; but I have never heard them say they suffered too much: for the Lord stood by them and strengthened them."[3]

Again, the stars are not all of the same colour. The Greek astronomers only recognised red and white stars—the star Sirius being one of the red ones: but now all the tints of the rainbow have been detected in the light of different stars. The stars Procyon, Capella, and *α* Polaris are yellow. The light of Castor is green, and that of *α* Lyræ is of a decided blue tint. Nevertheless, white is

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[1] Eph. vi. 10-18. [2] 2 Tim. ii. 3-5. [3] Letter to Mrs. T., April 3, 1775.

undoubtedly the colour—if it can be *called* a colour—of the great majority of the stars. M. W. Struve, the laborious astronomer of Dorpat and Poulkowa, has consecrated thirteen years of watching to the examination of 120,000 stars, amongst which he has found more than 3,000 double stars—the number of double stars which are catalogued now numbering upwards of 6,000; 650 of which have been demonstrated to be physically connected systems—two suns turning round a common centre of gravity. Among these double stars white is often found mixed with light or dark red, purple, ruby and vermilion. Then there is a green star with a deep blood-red companion; and an orange primary accompanied by a purple or indigo blue satellite —the respective colours in each of these groups being complementary colours, and making up pure white light. The triple star, γ Andromedæ, is formed of an orange-red sun, accompanied with two others, the light of which is of an emerald green colour—these colours again being complementary, and making up pure white light. It seems, however, to be an undoubted fact that some stars at least have changed their colour: for Sirius, which the ancient astronomers always represented as a *red* star, is now distinguished by a brilliant *whiteness*.

As I have so fully, however, gone into the subject of colour in my first volume of "The Hidden Mystery," and also considered its bearing with reference to the stones in the High Priest's Breastplate which represent the redeemed, as well as in the Chapters on "The Lord's Jewels," I must refer my readers to that volume for the needed reflexions on this subject; and I would, therefore, conclude this division by referring to what Herschell says upon an extremely remarkable group, situated in the Southern Cross, near the star Kappa. It is composed of 110 stars, of which seven only exceed the tenth magnitude. Among the principal ones, two are red and ruddy, one is of a greenish blue, two are green, and three others are of a pale green. And Herschell says of this group, "The stars which compose

it, seen in a telescope of diameter large enough to enable the colours to be distinguished, have the effect of *a casket of variously coloured precious stones*"[1]—words which instinctively remind us of three texts, placed (as the stars themselves are sometimes placed), *in conjunction*—"They that be wise *shall shine* as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness *as the stars* for ever and ever"[2]—"And they shall be mine, saith Jehovah of Hosts, in that day when I make up *my jewels*"[3]—"for one star *differeth* from another star," not only in colour, but also "*in glory*."[4]

But the Word says also that there are "*wandering* stars." Yes: and it also says that these are "clouds without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame;" "to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."[5] "For such are false Apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ. And no marvel: for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."[6] The reference is, of course, to comets, which sometimes make a great show in the world, through their long tails: but which are nothing better than mist and emptiness: for "the prophet that teacheth lies, he is *the tail*."[7] "For when they speak great swelling words of vanity they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage"—"to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever."[8]

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[1] "Astronomical Observations at the Cape of Good Hope," p. 17.

[2] Dan. xii. 3.

[3] Mal. iii. 17. See the two Chapters on "The Lord's Jewels," in the First Vol. of "The Hidden Mystery." [4] 1 Cor. xv. 41.

[5] Jude 12, 13. [6] 2 Cor. xi. 13-15. [7] Isa. ix. 15. [8] 2 Pet. ii. 17-19.

But how glorious the promises to the overcomers: who, as "the heavenly host," "shall shine as the Sun in the kingdom of their Father."[1] "To him that overcometh," saith Jesus, "will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne."[2] "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be His God, and he shall be My son."[3] If, even now, "whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God"[4]—what will it be, when *He* comes again, and "we shall be like Him:"—for "at that day," says He, "ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you."[5] We see it indeed exemplified in the "four living creatures," mentioned in the Book of the Revelation; which represent the redeemed in glory, "and who were full of eyes within;"[6] whom Ezekiel also saw in vision; and of whom he says, "Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, thither was their spirit to go;" "and they ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning."[7] And then, and then only, shall we fully realize the meaning of that oft-repeated phrase, "Thou that dwellest," not between, but "*in* the Cherubim;" or, as Young translates Psa. lxxx. 1, "*inhabiting the Cherubs*"[8]—"that in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus:"[9] for the Church of Christ is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In Whom ye also are builded together *for an habitation of God through the Spirit*"[10]—to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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[1] Cant. vi. 10; Mat. xiii. 43. [2] Rev. iii. 21. [3] Rev. xxi. 7.
[4] 1 John iv. 15. [5] John xiv. 20. [6] Rev. iv. 8-11; v. 8-10.
[7] Ezek. i. 14, 20. [8] 1 Sam. iv. 4; 2 Sam. vi. 2; 2 Kings xix. 15; Psa. lxxx. 1; xcix. 1; Isa. xxxvii. 16. See also Exod. xxv. 22; Num. vii. 8, 9; Ezek. x. 2, 7.
[9] Eph. ii. 7. [10] Eph. ii. 20-22.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SALVATION: ITS DIVINE SOURCE AND ITS INFINITE COST.

"Salvation! what a glorious plan,
How suited to our need!
The grace, that raises fallen man,
Is wonderful indeed!

"'Twas Wisdom form'd the vast design
To ransom us when lost!
And Love's unfathomable mine
Provided all the cost.

"Strict Justice, with approving look,
The holy Covenant seal'd:
And Truth and Power, both undertook
The whole should be fulfill'd.

"Truth, Wisdom, Justice, Power, and Love,
In all their glory shone,
When Jesus left the Courts above,
And died to save His own.

"Truth, Wisdom, Justice, Power, and Love,
Are equally display'd,
Now Jesus reigns enthron'd above,
Our Advocate, our Head!"

"This life is like a flying dream,
Or like the vapour from the stream,
Or like the grass that grows to-day,
But fades away,
When winds across it roughly play.

"Only Thyself, my God, art now
Just as Thou wert,—my Refuge Thou,—
Though rock and mountain be destroyed,
There is no void,
With Thy loved presence still enjoyed.

"Thus sojourning in this low scene,
Upon my Saviour I would lean,
And learn, as moments quickly fly,
Self to deny,
Dead to the world, before I die.

"Vain joys, away! yea, spread your wings!
For I have tasted better things.
I seek a portion all divine,
Ever to shine;
Lord Jesus, make me wholly Thine."

"And is there none before? no perfect peace
Unbroken by the storms and cares of life,
Until the time of waiting for Him cease,
By His appearing to destroy the strife?
No, none before.

"Do we not hear that through the flag of grace
By faithful messengers of God unfurled,
All men will be converted, and the place
Of man's rebellion be a holy world?
Yes, so we hear.

"Is it not true that to the Church is given
The holy honour of dispelling night,
And bringing back the human race to heaven,
By kindling everywhere the Gospel light?
It is not true.

"Is *this* the hope—that Christ the Lord will come,
In all the glory of His royal right,
Redeemer and Avenger, taking home,
His saints, and crushing the usurper's might?
This is the hope!"

"Salvation belongeth unto Jehovah: Thy blessing is upon Thy people."—PSA. iii. 8.

"Jehovah is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? Jehovah is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?—PSA. xxvii. 1.

"Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God."—PSA. l. 23.

"The holy Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."—2 TIM. iii. 15.

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."—ROM. i. 16.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 COR. iii. 11.

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—ACTS iv. 12.

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—ROM. x. 10.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 PET. i. 3-5.

AND having now so fully gone into the experimental aspect of the subject; I shall devote this closing Chapter to a brief consideration of "the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ;"[1] or, in other words, look at "the Salvation of God," as to its Divine source and infinite cost: without which the Treatise itself would have been incomplete.

Indeed, when we contemplate the character of God, as revealed to us in the Divine Word, and consider the depth to which man has fallen, in his contrariety to the Divine image and likeness in which he was originally created, we perceive at once the truth of what the Scriptures assert—that "Salvation," as well in its origin, as in its progress and final issue, is, and must be, *wholly "of the Lord."*[2]

For what *is* the character of God as revealed in the Divine Word? It is that of a God of infinite holiness, and of awful, inflexible justice. "There is none holy as the Lord;"[3] "a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He."[4] So pure, indeed, is He, that "the heavens are not clean in His sight."[5] He is "of purer eyes than to behold evil," and He "cannot look upon iniquity,"[6] with the least possible conceivable degree of complacency. Nay, so intensely does He hate all "lawlessness," or the slightest inconformity to His own glorious image and likeness, that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and

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[1] Rom. xv. 29. [2] Jonah ii. 9. [3] 1 Sam. ii. 1.
[4] Deut. xxxii. 4. [5] Job. xv. 15. [6] Hab. i. 13.

unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness;"[1] and "with an overrunning flood will He make an utter end of the place of" the wicked, "and darkness shall pursue His enemies."[2] Indeed, if this were *not* the character of God—that He could endure nothing in His sight and presence but the absolute perfection of holiness, according to the utmost capacity of the nature which He has given to His creatures; or, if it were *not* according to His nature to punish the least deviation from His own infinitely "perfect" and ever-blessed will, He would cease *to be* God, and would become like the sinner himself. Hence it is His purpose that those who are to be saved must be "conformed to the image of His Son;"[3] and when the Holy Ghost has finished His Divine work in them, they will finally be "presented faultless before the presence of" God's own "glory with exceeding joy."[4] And hence, conversely also, when our blessed Lord "comes" again "in the glory of His Father, with His angels,"[5] He will charge ungodly professors of the Gospel, who have rejected Him, with debasing this image and likeness to the level of their own "darkened understandings." "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldest take My covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest My words behind thee?" "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver."[6]

And has not man by nature utterly fallen away from God, and wholly lost the Divine image and likeness in which he was originally created? For both the Divine Word, as well as sad experience also, teach us that his "understanding is darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in him, because of the blindness of his

[1] Rom. i. 15. [2] Nahum. i. 8. [3] Rom. viii. 29.
[4] Jude 24. [5] Mat. xvi. 27. [6] Psa. l. 16, 17, 21, 22.

heart;"[1] while that "heart" itself "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" so that none but God Himself can "know"[2] it. His "carnal mind," moreover, "is enmity" itself "against God;" and not only "is *not* subject to the law of God," "but neither indeed can be."[3] Nay, so utterly depraved is he, that he delights to "walk according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now energizeth in the children of disobedience;"[4] while he is at the same time wholly unconscious of the awful fact. Does it, then, need any other evidence than this to prove that the source of Salvation is *Divine*, and that it must be infinite in its nature and extent, to meet and remedy so desperate a case as this?

And is it not so? For the Salvation which God Himself has provided reveals and magnifies all the infinite perfections of the Godhead. For in the life and death of the Son of God and Man, we behold all God's glorious attributes fully displayed and harmonized. "Surely His Salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven."[5] And do not these words instinctively remind us of the time when "the angel of the Lord came upon" "the shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night," "and the glory of the Lord shone round about them;" "and the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord"? "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace; good will toward men."[6]

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[1] Eph. iv. 18. [2] Jer. xvii. 9. [3] Rom. viii. 7.
[4] Eph. ii. 2. [5] Psa. lxxxv. 9-11. [6] Luke ii. 11, 13, 14.

Yes, the eye of infinite Justice and of awful Holiness looked down upon that Blessed One, and followed Him through every track and avenue of His holy life; and Omniscience itself could find no flaw in it. For he was "holy, harmless, undefiled," and "separate from sinners;"[1] and "in Him is no sin."[2] "Jehovah was," therefore, "well pleased for His righteousness' sake;" for "He magnified the Law, and made it honourable,"[3] by such an obedience to it as no mere created intelligence could by possibility have rendered. And, therefore, "Christ is" now "the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth:"[4] for He "came not to abolish the Law," but "to fulfil"[5] it. And when "He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace was upon Him;" when "Jehovah laid on Him the iniquity of us all;"[6] and "He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself,"[7] and "brought in an everlasting righteousness"[8] —"even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe"[9]—the infinite holiness of God was fully vindicated: for the dishonour that man had put upon it was thoroughly avenged, and all the matchless perfections of the Godhead were displayed in all their glory.

But oh, the *infinite cost* of this glorious Salvation! Well might the Apostle say to believers in the Lord, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich."[10] Nay, so transcendently glorious is this "great Salvation," that the Scriptures assure us that it occupied the Divine mind from all eternity; and that Creation itself was but intended as a platform whereon to display the glories of Divine redemption. And, therefore, Redemption will form the chief song of praise throughout eternity; for we read, "And I heard the voice of many

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[1] Heb. vii. 26. [2] 1 John iii. 5. [3] Isa. xlii. 21. [4] Rom. x. 4.
[5] Mat. v. 17. [6] Isa. liii. 5, 6. [7] Heb. ix. 26. [8] Dan. ix. 24.
[9] Rom. iii. 22. [10] 2 Cor. viii. 9.

angels round about the throne, and the living creatures" (representing the redeemed themselves), "saying, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."[1] Consequently, in the Divine counsels, Redemption took the precedence of Creation; or, in other words, Creation was planned for Redemption itself. For we are expressly told, that "God" "chose" His redeemed ones "in Christ," "before the foundation of the world," "to the praise of the glory of His grace."[2]

But, I say again, at what an infinite cost! For, to effect this glorious purpose, it became necessary that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ should take our nature into his Godhead, and in that nature live the life that we ought to have lived under the law of God, which we had broken; and die, as our Head and Representative, under its awful curse, which we had so justly merited. For the Being sinned against was infinite: therefore, the Being making satisfaction must be infinite likewise; otherwise, there would have been no equivalent satisfaction. And inasmuch as the being sinning was man, it became necessary also that the Being making satisfaction must be man likewise. "Forasmuch," then, "as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."[3] And who can fathom the depth of humiliation to which He thus descended, or guage the awful anguish of soul which He thus endured? For, if He would have the Bride, He must take her as she *is*; He must take her with all she *has*—her sin, her suffering, her curse, her punishment—the hell that was bound up with her, and the wrath of God that was upon her: and for *her* sake, therefore, He took her cup of anguish, and He drained it to the very dregs! Yes, so

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[1] Rev. v. 11, 12. [2] Eph. i. 4, 6. [3] Heb. ii. 14, 15.

perfectly was the will of "the man Christ Jesus" bent to the will of God, that when "it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him," and "to put Him to grief," it pleased *Him*. When "it pleased" the Father to "make His soul an offering for sin,"[1] it pleased *Him*. And although He cried out, when on the cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" He yet added, with the most perfect heart-trust, and confidence in God, "But Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel."[2] Here, then, is the Atonement for all our guilt, the satisfaction for all our breaches of the holy law of God. Justice has now been fully satisfied; all our debts have been honourably paid: for "He restored that which He took not away";[3] and we have been lawfully acquitted. And, as a proof of this, our glorious Christ has been raised from the dead: for "He was delivered on account of our offences," which had thus been "laid upon Him";[4] and "He was raised again on account of our justification,"[5] which He had thus accomplished. And "the Holy Ghost" has been "sent down from heaven"[6] to bear witness to this blessed truth, and to "make His abode with us,"[7] in order that He may take possession of our whole being, so that He may thereby "conform us to the image"[8] of that Blessed Son Himself!

Hence God only now recognises two men, Adam and Christ—"The first man is of the earth, earthy; the Second Man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the Heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly."[9] And all men are, therefore, either in the one or in the other—if in Adam, in their state of nature, still in sin, and consequently under wrath and curse; if in Christ, by grace freed from sin, "born again of the Spirit," and "blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in

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[1] Isa. liii. 10. [2] Psa. xxii. 1, 3; Mat. xxvii. 46. [3] Psa. lxix. 4.
[4] Isa. liii. 6. [5] Rom. iv. 25. [6] 1 Pet. i. 12.
[7] John xiv. 17, 23. [8] Rom. viii. 29. [9] 1 Cor. xv. 47-49.

Him."[1] For, when the angels sinned, the sin of one was not necessarily the sin of another, much less the sin of all; but when Adam sinned, as he stood at the head of the Old Creation of God, his posterity sinned also in him, and his sin is, therefore, imputed to them. So when Christ, who is Head of the New Creation of God, "took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,"[2] all His people stood in Him, and the righteousness which He thus wrought out for them is imputed to them. "For as by one man's disobedience the many," who were in Him as their federal head, "were constituted sinners: so by the obedience of the One, the many," who were in Him also as their federal head, "shall be constituted righteous."[3] "For He hath made Him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."[4] So that when Christ died, all believers died representatively in Him.[5] For "our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be stripped of its dominion, that henceforth we should not serve sin."[6] When he was buried, they were buried with Him:[7] which is beautifully set forth in Believer's Baptism. When He rose again from the dead, they rose with Him.[8] When He ascended up into heaven, they ascended up with Him; and they now "sit with Him in the heavenlies,"[9] far above the condemning power of the Law, sin, death, hell, and all adversaries—their "life" being "hid with Christ in God,"[10] too high for them to take down to lose, and far, far too high for Satan to reach up to touch; and "because He" ever "lives," they "shall" ever "live also."[11]

Need I say that *such* a Salvation as *this* is *Divine* in its *source;* and that it is also of *infinite value*, as well as of *eternal efficacy?* Oh! "Thanks be unto God for His Unspeakable Gift!"[12]

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[1] Eph. i. 3. [2] Phil. ii. 7, 8. [3] Rom. v. 19. [4] 2 Cor. v. 21.
[5] Rom. vi. 8. [6] Rom. vi. 6. [7] Rom. vi. 4. [8] Col. iii. 1.
[9] Eph. ii. 6. [10] Col. iii. 3. [11] John xiv. 19. [12] 2 Cor. ix. 15.

"What then? Why then another pilgrim song;
And then a hush of rest divinely granted;
And then a thirsty stage, (Ah me, so long!)
And then a brook, just where it is most wanted.

"What then? The pitching of the evening tent;
And then, perchance, a pillow rough and thorny;
And then some sweet and tender message, sent
To cheer the faint one for to-morrow's journey.

"What then? The wailing of the midnight wind:
A feverish sleep; a heart oppressed and aching;
And then a little water-cruse to find
Close by my pillow, ready for my waking.

"What then? I am not careful to enquire:
I know there will be tears, and fears, and sorrow;
And then a loving SAVIOUR drawing nigher,
And saying, '*I* will answer for the morrow.'

"What then? For all my sins His pardoning grace;
For all my wants and woes His lovingkindness;
For darkest shades the shining of God's face;
And CHRIST'S own hand to lead me in my blindness.

"What then? A shadowy valley, lone and dim:
And then a deep and darkly rolling river;
And then a flood of light—a seraph hymn—
And GOD'S own smile, for ever and for ever!"

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